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JULY 1992
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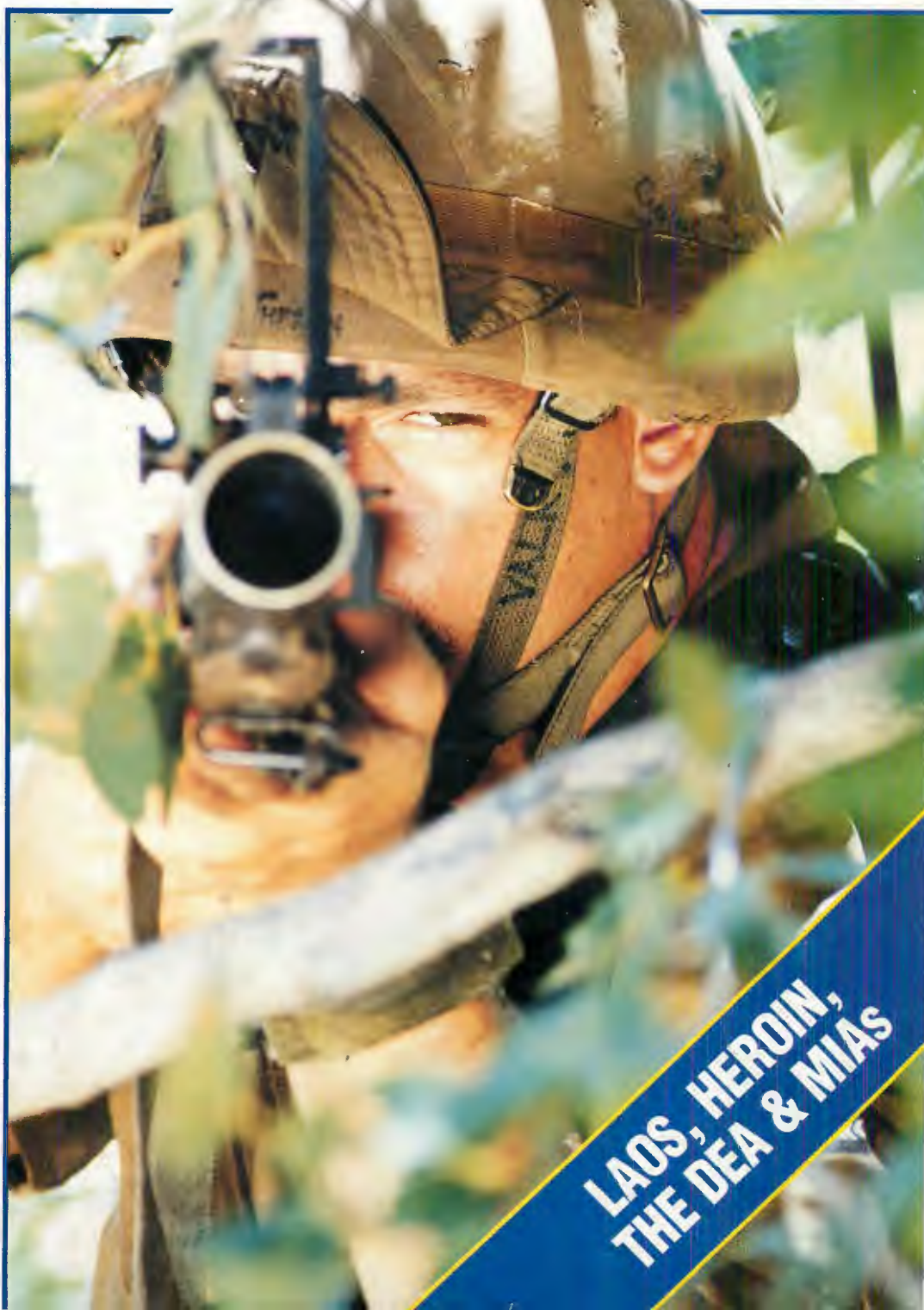
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SOF's Outdoor Editor, Galen L. Geer, has arranged for a May, 1993 Safari where a limited number of *SOF* readers can join *Soldier Of Fortune* Editor Publisher Robert K. Brown and Geer on a 10-day South African and Zambian Safari.

In addition to the Safari, *SOF* Magazine and Geer are now offering a complete African Safari booking service through an agreement with Roc's Safaris and one of the country's top travel agencies. *SOF* and Geer will map out your Safari, planning your hunt in South Africa and Zambia for the best trophy opportunities.

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by Robert K. Brown

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BATF Jumps The Gun

Once again (and why are we not surprised?), the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms (BATF) is doing strange and wonderful things to what we previously thought was the clear meaning of acts of Congress. And using your tax dollars.

To the detriment, this time, of custom gunsmith operations (which are mostly small, very craftsmanlike businesses) and also the rather large number of private gun owners whose tastes and pocketbooks run to customized shooting irons.

Under U.S. Code Title 26, Section 4181, manufacturers and importers of firearms are subject to an excise tax at the time of initial sale of firearms, at the rate of 10% for handguns and 11% for long guns. Under Section 4161 of the same Title, this tax also applies to bows, arrows and fishing equipment. As with all taxing statutes, there are the costs of record keeping, reporting, and so on. For the large manufacturers, like Beretta or Sturm Ruger, this is not an intolerable burden — for the one-man gunsmithing operation, it's quite another thing. And this is where the BATF has got the bit in its teeth.

What is a manufacturer? Without bothering to go through the regular procedure of promulgating a formal regulation, the BATF has come up with some bizarre notions here: If a gunsmith purchases a complete pistol (e.g., from Beretta) and then rebuilds it or even engraves it, he is then a

"manufacturer" for purposes of paying the excise tax, keeping records and, all that. He can, of course, seek a refund for the amount of excise tax paid by the prior "manufacturer" and, eventually, the refund may even be paid by the government.

Somehow, in the BATF's way of thinking, engraving a weapon is "manufacturing," but putting a telescope on it isn't. Even more bizarre, if I buy a gun from gunsmith "A" and take it to gunsmith "B" for a custom rebuild, I am the "manufacturer," while gunsmith "B" is merely a contractor, and since the resulting customized weapon is for my personal use, the excise tax isn't payable. Makes sense, doesn't it? And the costs for collection and enforcement of all this nonsense are significantly more than the revenue generated. We, as taxpayers, pay the difference.

One major and significant effort to remedy this situation is Sen. Robert Packwood's (R-Ore.) Senate Bill 918. Its major provision is to exempt "manufacturers" who produce 50 or fewer units per year from the excise tax and its record-keeping burdens.

Keeping in mind that this is an election year and a lot of politicians want to keep their jobs, now is a real good time to get out strong but respectful letters to your senators and representatives, urging them to support and enact Sen. Packwood's Senate Bill 918. ✕



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Photo: U.S. Navy

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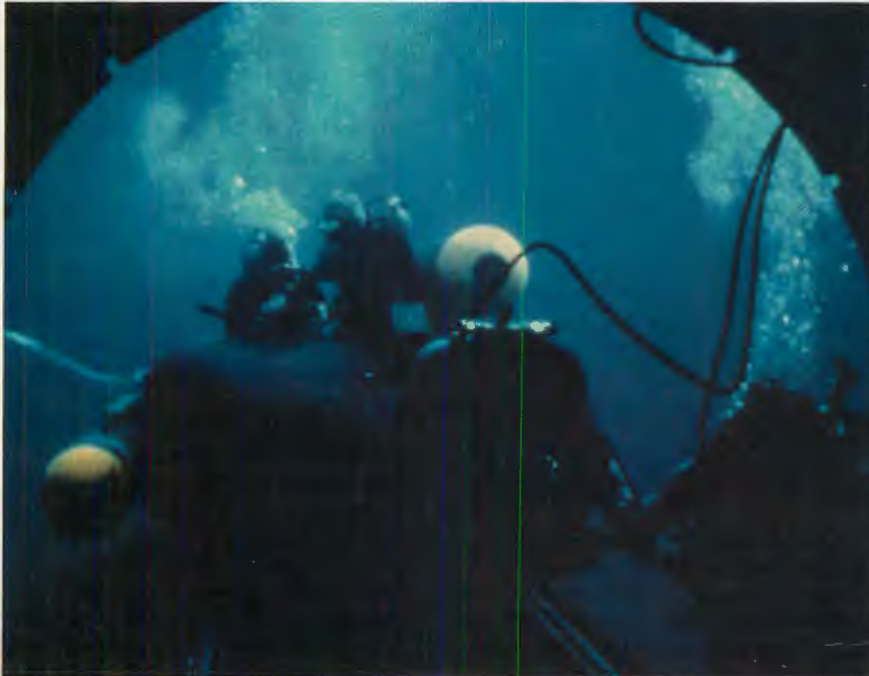


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Photo: Marty Casey



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Photo: courtesy John Weisman

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South African 44th Brigade parabat aims M79 grenade launcher. The "Bloop Tube" has established a reputation in three decades of conflict from Angola to Vietnam. Photo: courtesy Ammscor

BULLETIN BOARD



What do leathernecks read while training in desert warfare at 29 Palms? Photo: Lance Cpl. R. A. Griffin, USMC

RED SONS IN THE SAILS SET

Update: At a cost of \$500,000, the *Age of Russia* syndicate airfreighted their entry for the America's Cup yacht races to San Diego, then the plane returned home with a load of American-donated toys and medicine for the starving Russians. Make sense so far?

At last report, the 75-foot, 25-ton hull was still languishing on steel scaffolding at the Knight & Carver boatyard on Mission Bay, unfinished. After the syndicate failed to pay their bills, they signed the hull over to Knight & Carver for debts and split for Moscow. Knight & Carver has tried to sell the hull to recoup a \$25,000 import bond they posted on the Russians' behalf, to no avail. As we go to press, the *Age of Russia* is scheduled to be trashed — at a further cost to Knight & Carver of \$710 — at San Diego's Miramar landfill.

UPDATE: LAWMASTER AND THE PHANTOM ACCUSER

The judicial travesty against John Lawmaster, the hapless Tulsa gun owner whose home and constitutional rights were ravaged, continues as the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms plays the federal judiciary as pawns in a game of Cover Your Ass.

Certain he has suffered "at least \$1,000" in physical damage to his home and property, and convinced his constitutional rights have been abused (see "Gun Gestapo," June '92), Lawmaster sought out a Tulsa attorney who represents clients victimized by government.

As of this writing, attorney Steven L. Sessinghaus has yet to decide exactly which legal tack to take. The search warrant for Lawmaster's house was based on probable cause supposedly contained in a sworn statement which the Tulsa BATF office is taking great pains to keep secret. Lawmaster naturally wants to know who accused him — or if anyone really did accuse him — of owning an illegal weapon. Normally, such sworn affidavits, when they are used as the basis to obtain a search warrant, are unsealed after the warrant is executed. And normally, a right to know and face an

accuser is a fundamental part of U.S. jurisprudence.

In what Sessinghaus thought would be a routine matter, he filed a motion with U.S. Magistrate John Leo Wagner — the man who signed the original search warrant — asking to unseal the affidavit on which the warrant was based. But the U.S. Attorney's office in Tulsa, using information provided by BATF, filed an objection, claiming Lawmaster does not have legal standing to do so.

How about his rights as a U.S. citizen under the Constitution?

Wagner refused Sessinghaus' request on behalf of Lawmaster without comment.

"The court is relying on what the government tells them, and I don't think that is appropriate in this case," Lawmaster's attorney told *SOF*.

"We're alleging wrongdoing by the government and the court. For all we know, the supposed informant may have lied, or BATF agents may have embellished something they just heard on the street. Considering the unreasonable way in which Mr. Lawmaster's house was searched, and the shabby way he's been treated as a law-abiding citizen, we think we have a right to look into that."

Al-Jubail, Saudi Arabia, where it's illegal to drink, also wants to warn motorists not to drive *in the drink*. Sign posted en route to USCG Port Security Unit 301. Photo: GM Rand I. Bartlett, USCG



Sessinghaus appealed Wagner's refusal to unseal the affidavit to U.S. District Court Judge Thomas R. Brett. On 23 March, Brett upheld Wagner's decision to keep the sworn statement secret, saying that to unseal it "might make the person or persons ... vulnerable to reprisal."

Brett didn't specify whether he meant physical or legal reprisal, such as a federal agent who might get his ass sued off. Brett further noted that to unseal the affidavit could compromise "an ongoing [BATF] investigation."

The last reason is quite interesting. If there is an "ongoing

BULLETIN BOARD

investigation" of Lawmaster — if he is supposedly such a dread menace to society — it is curious how only days before Brett's decision, the local BATF office approved the issuance of a Federal Firearm Dealer's License to Lawmaster, who has since opened the "Gun & Ammo Jail" at 2620 E. 15th St. in Tulsa.

Sessinghaus has appealed Brett's decision to Denver's 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, but getting a hearing date will take several months, the attorney said. If that fails, he will take the ultimate step and appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Anyone who wishes to mail a contribution — which is NOT tax deductible — to help defray Lawmaster's legal expenses may do so by writing to: Lawmaster Legal Fund, c/o Steven L. Sessinghaus, P.O. Box 200, Tulsa, OK 74101-0200.

Contributed by James L. Pate

SPYING IN URUGUAY?

Reader Phil Bancroft sent us a Reuters story stating that the "Michelangelo" computer virus cost the Uruguayan army all its counterintelligence files. No, it didn't affect us here at *Soldier Of Fortune*, but then there's little you can do to hurt a Smith-Corona upright.

JET-SETTING, RUSSIAN STYLE

Your dream of flying a Soviet MiG-29, MiG-31, SU-24 and SU-27 can come true for only \$22,500. Air Adventures of Lakewood, Colorado, is booking eight-day tour packages including airfare to Russia, transportation/food/lodging there, ground school, flight time, flight suit, boots and personalized flight helmet. If your dream is to fly a leading-edge Soviet fighter rather than hold \$22,500 in your hand all at once, contact Air Adventures at 13131 West Cedar Drive, No. 301, Lakewood, CO 80228; phone: 303-628-8022.

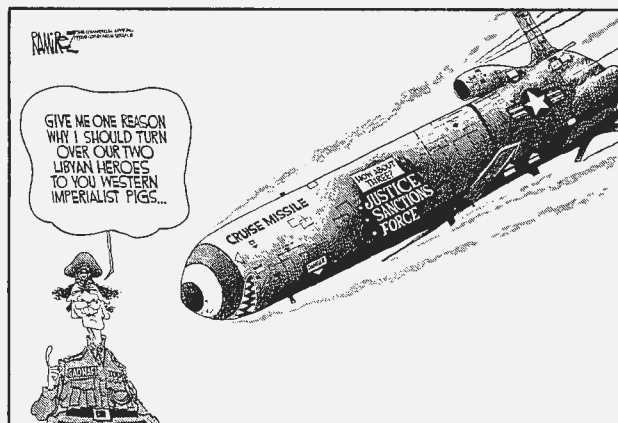
ATTABOY, LARRY

Larry Porterfield, president of Midway Arms (Dept. SOF, 5875-D, W. Van Horn Tavern Road, Columbia, MO 65203-9979), purveyor of a humongous line of shooter's accessories and

an all-around fine fellow, is putting his shoulder to the wheel (*plus* his money where his mouth is) and collecting contributions for the NRA/ILA National Endowment for the Protection of the Second Amendment. Every time a person orders by phone, Larry asks permission to "round up" the total to the next dollar, then he relays this — every penny of it — to the NRA/ILA. And when he sends it in every month, he throws in \$1,000 out of his own pocket.

BYE-BYE, P.I.

The *Pacific Stars and Stripes* has published a farewell salute to U.S.



military presence in the Philippines. The tabloid-format magazine, entitled "Bye-Bye PI — A Farewell to the Philippines" is available by mail for only \$1 plus \$1 postage/handling, from: Pacific Stars and Stripes, Attn: Periodicals Department, Unit 45002, APO AP 96337-0110. If you ever sailed through or were stationed in the PI, you'll want to get a copy.

MURDER RATE SOARS IN KENNESAW, GEORGIA

Ten years ago, Kennesaw, Georgia, passed a city ordinance requiring that, except for criminals or conscientious objectors, every house in the city was to be armed. As a result, within seven months residential burglary had dropped 89%. But of course, with the city now being a seething hotbed of armed citizens, with guns so readily accessible, Kennesaw's murder rate has skyrocketed. Right? Well, we sup-

pose Handgun Control Inc. would like to figure so — but it's a little hard to calculate, because last year there were *no* murders in Kennesaw. It's just so doggone hard to twist statistics, when there are *no* statistics to twist.

LEBANESE SURPLUS

A friendly arms dealer informs us that some \$150 million worth of surplus arms were being offered for \$47 million by the Lebanese Christian militia. Included on the list were AK-47s, AK-74s, .50 M2s, FN MAGs, 90mm and 106mm recoilless, TOW launchers, 20mm cannon, 23mm and 57mm AA guns, RPGs, mines, claymores, SA-7s,

etc. At the bottom of the list was the notation that no export license was needed, and no end-user certificate was needed. We don't know if this means that peace has come to Lebanon, or if war is about to break out somewhere else.

USAF SPECOPS SCHOOL WANTS RIGHT STUFF

USAF Special Operations School at Hurlburt Field, Florida, is reprinting "Night Stalkers Don't Quit" by Greg Walker from the March '92 *SOF* for use in their course "Introduction to Special Operations." Some 600 students per year from all service branches attend this USAF school.

THE REUNION NETWORK

A series of Military Reunion Planning Training Conferences will be held in various cities during 1992. These are hands-on, how-to training sessions, worthwhile for anybody planning a military reunion. Northwest Airlines and Avis are sponsors of the reunion network. Conferences cost enrollees only \$25, which includes breakfast, lunch, course materials and a subscription to *The Reunion News*. For more info, contact Bob Brooks; phone: 800-788-1941. ☒

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SOF 7/92

WHY NO EMPLOYMENT ADS?

Soldier Of Fortune Magazine is thought of around the world as the "Journal of Professional Adventurers" (i.e., mercs). But, nowhere within its pages does it give "job opportunities." Granted, many of us have our contacts, but sometimes it is hard for employer and employee to hook up over thousands of miles. And like any other career field, sometimes the opportunities are gone before they begin. Why not drop a line on the high-paying jobs available. Or at least let us start advertising in your classified section, so that we can get our own contacts.

Mark Andrews
Wood River, Illinois

We discontinued running personal service ads in 1986 when we found out that, in addition to legitimate security and military activities, there had been several cases where individuals had been hired allegedly through ads in *SOF* to commit murders and other serious crimes. Innocent people got killed and several very burdensome lawsuits resulted. The only one so far that went the whole route we eventually won on appeal, but still ...

ANIMALS HAVE RIGHTS

To Galen Geer:

I have read *SOF* for 10 years and until now have considered it a first-rate

publication. Your articles on animal groups are trash. These people are not the enemy as you have labeled them.

I think animals do have certain rights and we as superior humans should enforce this, because there is way too much so-called medical testing going on that does not need to take place. There are ways to do the same research in a more humane way.

Bob Brown should pull the plug on you. Take a hike, Geer.

Tory Ottaviano
Phoenix, Arizona

Thank you for your input. I believe that animals don't have rights; people have responsibilities. — Galen Geer

GUN OWNERS SHOULD GET INVOLVED

This election year may be your last chance to save your right of private firearms ownership. If we don't boot the anti-gun representatives out and also fill the vacant seats with pro-gun people, next year will probably see the most restrictive gun bills to date, including a new Brady Bill, restrictions or a total ban on most semiautomatic rifles and shotguns, as well as handgun and ammunition bans and/or restrictions.

Can we fight and win? Yes. Register and vote — make sure all of your fellow gun-owner friends do the same. Your

individual vote *does* count. Get an absentee ballot if you are going to be out of town.

If you don't get involved, don't complain when your guns and ammo are restricted and banned.

David J. Densmore
100% Disabled Vietnam Veteran
St. Clair, Michigan

OVERSEAS JOBS

I am writing in regard to an article which I read on my first Med float. It dealt with several American companies which fulfilled foreign construction contracts. This interests me quite a bit nowadays. Could you possibly run a copy of the article and send it to me? I would appreciate your assistance in this matter.

Semper fi

J.E. Patrick
Camp Lejeune, North Carolina

*We are forwarding a copy of "Fistful of Dollars" that appeared in the May 1991 *SOF*. Hope it helps.*

THE REAL FORGOTTEN WAR

During the Korean War, the North Korean People's Army took an estimated 2,500 persons prisoner in one early action, and all that was found of the group were 96 POWs that they threw from a train headed north when the train was in danger of being trapped by an airdrop from the 2nd Battalion, 187th Airborne. Of the 96 persons, 66 had been murdered, seven were dead of starvation and all remaining were injured. *None* of the rest of the 2,400 were ever located.

Sixteen nations involved had 472,393 dead, in addition to approximately 4.4 million civilians killed in only three years. At the cease-fire, only 3,597 POWs were returned.

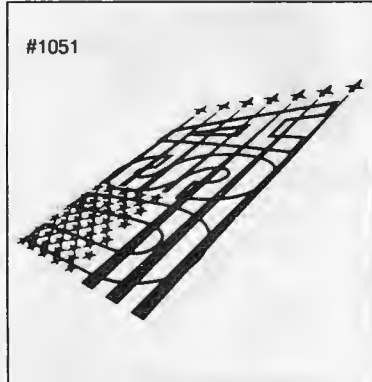
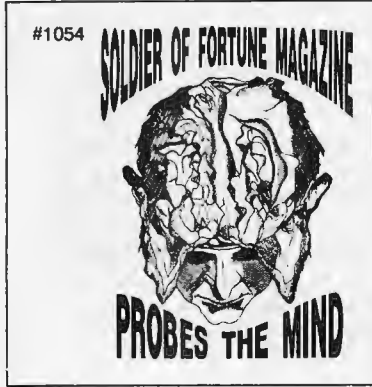
Incidentally, since the North now wants to become friends, remember that every chaplain POW was killed or allowed to die. Captured soldiers were murdered after having hands tied behind their backs, some with barbed wire around hands and mouths. Some had their tongues torn out; others were doused with gas and set on fire. They tossed gas cans into filled ambulances and set them on fire — probably worse treatment than in 'Nam or any other "modern" war.



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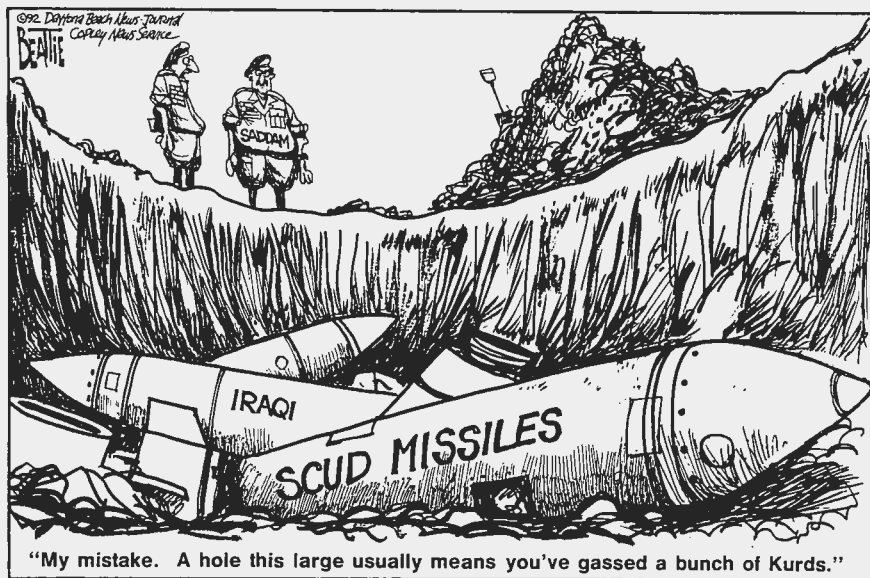
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There's no "Wall" or memorial with names. Few libraries have many books on the subject. It is truly a forgotten war except to those who fought there.

Bob Steiner
Upland, California

LEECHES AND FLAKES ...

Here are a few bucks to help you do battle with those leeches and flakes that are attempting to break you. Remember the words of "Vinegar Joe" Stilwell, "Don't let the bastards wear you down."

Nick Reynolds
Port Washington, New York

Received the letter about the lawsuits and it disturbs me tremendously. It seems as if this country is under attack from within, not only by all the greedy lawyers but also by the self-serving, conniving environmental wackos and other anti-freedom groups with their own political agendas. These scum have accomplished the near-destruction of this country's economy and are more to blame for our current problems than Japan or any of the

other governments on this planet. The out-of-control litigation in the United States today has caused large corporations, and smaller businesses as well, to expend more of their budgets on legal defense than they spend for R&D and other concerns. When you have exhausted all your profits on protecting the business, what is left to compensate your employees?

I commend SOF Magazine for superior reporting and an outstanding job for all of the past 17 years. I have been a constant (although silent) supporter for all those years and will remain so in the, hopefully, many years to come.

Death to tyranny in all its forms.

Dave Kneeland
Wheat Ridge, Colorado

Enclosed you will find a check for \$200. I hope that it will demonstrate to you and others that your type of magazine is needed today.

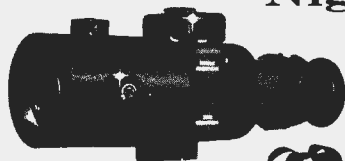
Having lived all over the world as a military dependent and then as a soldier, I have served my country in one fashion or another for the past 21 years. I continue to support and defend the Constitution of the United States of America. It is my privilege to support you and the magazine I have come to trust in reporting world affairs.

Bobby S. Murphy

I'm glad to help. It's not much, but if

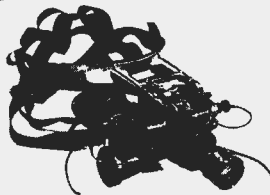
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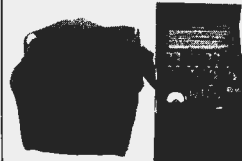
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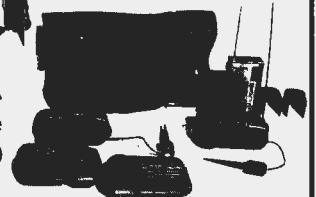
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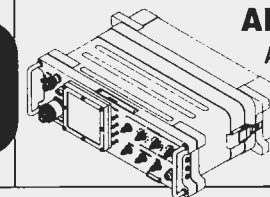


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all the readers of *SOF* gave an hour's pay, it would be a big help. Keep up the good work.

Ben Ferguson
Freeport, Florida

I was saddened to hear of the legal battles that your organization has had to conduct to defend itself from frivolous lawsuits. When one has to defend themselves in the arena of the courtroom, this can be a very expensive venture. I would like you to know that I will support you in this area as much as possible.

Name Withheld
National Border Patrol Council
Chula Vista, California

I have greatly appreciated your honest appraisals of world situations, product reviews, historical and "how-to" articles on techniques and equipment over the years.

Now that Omega is temporarily down on its luck due to frivolous, malicious and totally surreal lawsuits, I have a chance to return a bit of what you have given me over the years.

Dave Orchard
Sequim, Washington

I have enclosed a check for \$20, because I understand the need for good courtroom litigators along with

the expenses that one can incur when hiring such attorneys. I only wish that I could send more, but I am currently unemployed. I was honorably discharged from the Army on 28 February of this year, serving three years with counterintelligence as a special agent. After I land a good job, I will send more if the need is still there.

I realize that \$20 is a measly amount considering the insurmountable legal fees incurred by Omega Group; this is all that I can afford. I enjoy *SOF* Magazine, support the actions of Omega Group Ltd., and would like to do what I can to preserve the First Amendment and Omega Group.

R.B. Miller
White Plains, Kentucky

Please keep up the good work. We need you. I'm sorry I can't send more. I had my part-time gunsmith business shut down by our anti-gun police chief, the legal fees are crazy and I'm looking for a new home away from this bozo.

Christopher J. La Marche
Westfield, Massachusetts

Good luck and keep up the fire. I know \$10 isn't much, but if all your readers contribute a similar amount, it should help.

Your magazine fills a much-needed gap in the press and hopefully will

continue for many years to come.

Name Withheld
USMC Intelligence Center
Quantico, Virginia

Only someone who has had some contact with this kind of legal baloney can appreciate the situation you are in. The way "legalism" can bankrupt otherwise sound businesses is probably the greatest threat to our society today.

Jack Rounds, Jr.
Tyler, Texas

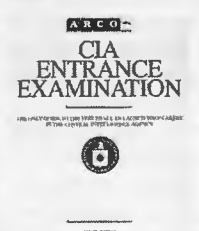
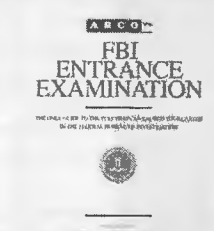
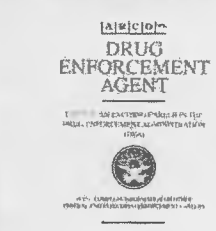
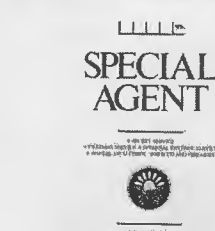

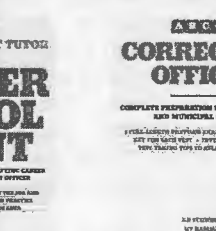

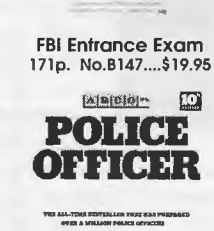
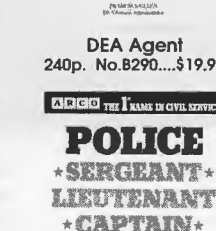
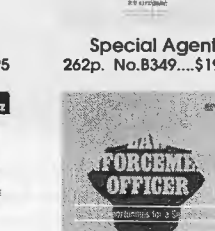
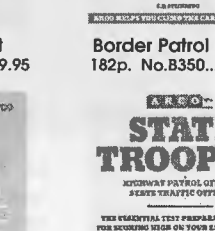
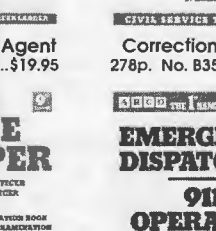
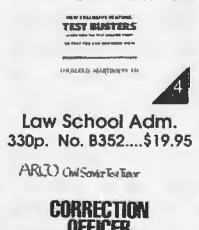
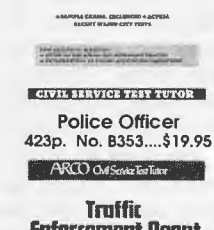

Here's a check to help out your legal expenses. Unfortunately, more lawsuits such as those will come against you unless you take the offensive. After winning a legal battle, turn around and sue the bastards who attempted to sue you. Sue for the expenses they caused you, sue them and make them hurt — get a reputation. A war is never won on the defensive. I'll gladly send you four times this amount to nail the bastards.

Jim Nolan
Conifer, Colorado

I've been a faithful *SOF* subscriber for more than 10 years and, quite frankly, the thought of losing your magazine really pisses me off.

Continued on page 74

CRIME IS A GROWTH INDUSTRY! "BETTER TO BE THE HUNTER, THAN THE HUNTED!"

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COMBAT CRAFT

by Louis Awerbuck

Home Alone

IT'S 0300 — you hear a noise downstairs.

Your wife shows no interest in being cannon fodder and Fido is snoring peacefully, disinterested in earning his Alpo.

So, it's left up to Mister Macho.

First, analyze the situation before doing anything else. This applies to the invaded homeowner, the lone law-enforcement officer, or the military man separated from his unit.

There are no rules with tactics, but there is a Golden Guideline: *Fight first with the mind, then with the body.* When you're on your own, and therefore employing one-man tactics, you have only one certainty — the cavalry isn't going to be there to back you up.

Don't negotiate an area on your own unless you absolutely have to. If it's not a deadly force situation involving yourself or a third party you care about, it's not worth dying for.

Controlled anger can be an asset in a conflict — but lose your temper and you lose control of the situation.

So many homeowners are so incensed at the thought of somebody stealing their hard-earned possessions that they toss caution to the wind, grab a weapon and hurtle through the house looking for "that so-and-so who's trying to steal my TV." Such actions are more likely to cost them their lives than save their TV sets.

So Mr. Homeowner's first choice would be to barricade himself in the bedroom, maintaining control of the doorway from a position of cover. The next step is to dial 911, describe the situation, your location — and *stay where you are* until the cavalry arrives.

If, however, you are forced to do the snoop and poop yourself, it must be precisely calculated all the way.

It's not enough to think that you



Mr. Homeowner's first choice should be to barricade himself in the bedroom, maintaining control of the doorway from a position of cover.

have the advantage because you know the layout of your house. Remember Fido — he of the reverberating nostrils? The reason he's snoring is because he pigged out on a ham bone all day — and said bone is now lying on the top of the stairs, waiting for you to trip over it with your stamped-in feet.

Why didn't you see the bone? Because you had the foresight to leave off the lights so you wouldn't backlight yourself, you clever devil. No, a knowledge of the floor plan and cutting off of

illumination isn't the total package. In fact, there are times when switching on the lights can be beneficial — the tactical situation will be different practically every single time.

The most important aspect of a one-man search is to slow down the operation, so as not to put your brain and optics on overload. You can't scan a wide area quickly, and you can't both scan an area and cover your back at the same time. Single-person tactics are a crap game, with your life as the stakes. You stabilize in as safe an area as possible, analyze the situation, pick the lesser of the evils facing you — then roll the dice and pray.

If you're on your own, you may well be in the most dangerous tactical situation you will ever get into, because you can never fully control the situation. All you can do is alter the odds slightly.

The least sensory-overloading, sphincter-shrinking system is to scan one small area at a time, preferably from a position of cover or concealment. Stay as wide away from "blind"

angles/corners as possible. You may, however, have to approach these corners for tactical trade-off reasons. If this necessitates utilizing a "quick-peek" technique, *never* do it the same way twice. Change the elevation, or whatever, but don't set up a pattern for your enemy to key off.

Be sure to scan both laterally and vertically. Move quietly and protect your back at all times. If you can't use your eyes for the latter, block doors, sprinkle sugar on the floor — do *something* to give you at least an audible warning of a rear attack.

Beware of light conditions, shadows and most importantly, reflective surfaces. If your reflection is seen in a mirror, window, chrome furnishing, TV

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Unless you're in a full-scale military operation, you have to put any downed enemy out of commission.

screen or chandelier — you're history. While you have to physically identify your enemy as hostile, he has no such constraints. If he can pinpoint your position, he can lay down fire through walls, doors and ceilings.

Don't mistake concealment for cover. Open doors by standing off to the side of the jamb: If you don't, he'll nail you through the door the second you start to swing it open. Use lights and shadows to your advantage, and don't bypass anything you haven't checked — including any of the opposition you may already have dealt with.

Unless you're in a full-scale military operation, you have to put any downed enemy out of commission. This entails handcuffing or tying his hands together, which compounds your tactical problems if you must still deal with other intruders. No, you can't "take a chance" and blithely march off in search of his associates, even if you think he's out of the fight.

If you have to negotiate down a stairwell, at least examine the avenue from as low a body angle as possible and from as far away as possible before commencing your approach. This will open up a large vertical area to your vision before you get closer — and closer is always a last resort.

As far as the actual negotiation, it can't be done with any degree of safety by one man, because you are obliged to scan two areas simultaneously and will probably run out of luck.

While this may be depressing information, at least it's honest. This isn't Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood. In this neighborhood, if you lose, you die.

And all for a lousy TV set that was probably insured anyway ...

Louis Awerbuck is honcho of Yavapai Firearms Academy in Prescott Valley, Arizona. ☒

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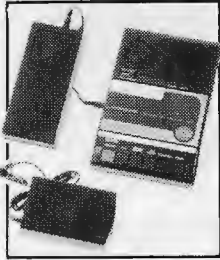
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*Notice: These kits are to be used **ONLY** for experimentation, testing and training in Electronic Countermeasures. See warning.

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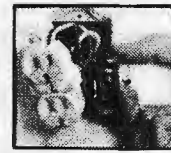
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I WAS THERE

by Steve Shimanek

Sudden Death, Swift Heroism

The night of 25 February 1991 started out as another typical night in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia. The war was going well; morale was high.

I lived in a civilian villa complex, halfway between Dhahran and the seaport of Dammam. Air raid warnings were viewed as a nuisance unless Scuds had been actually launched and intercepted in our area. I actually slept through an alert once, waking up only long enough to put on my protective mask. Next day, I learned that the Scud responsible for the alert was targeted at Riyadh.

This sense of complacency was shattered on 25 February. At about 2045 hours the Scud alert sounded. As I put on my protective gear, a heavy explosion shook the villa. Due to its strategic value, the eastern province area we were defending was subject to many Scud missile attacks — we called it Scud Row. I had already been through a number of Scud attacks; I knew immediately that, unlike previous missiles, this Scud had found a target.

From the roof of the villa, I could see a column of thick, black smoke marking the impact site. Knowing the area of impact held a shopping center, toy store and apartment complex, I pulled on my uniform and went to see if I could help.

The missile had landed approximately a half-mile from the villa, impacting directly on a warehouse. Hundreds of Arabs and third-country nationals blocked the access road. Using hand signals and my vehicle's horn, I got to within 100 yards of the flaming warehouse.

A reek of high explosive, burning insulation and other less identifiable odors hit me. Jagged sheets of metal siding and clumps of smoldering insulation lay in piles. A bus loaded with casualties was blocked by fallen debris, so I began helping clear a path. As the bus left for a hospital, I saw a U.S. soldier with a wounded arm stagger out of the warehouse. I realized it was



Author was serving as project officer for fielding new armored vehicles in Saudi Arabia when Iraqi Scud fell on crowded barracks 25 February 1991.

Photo: courtesy Steven A. Shimanek

being used as a temporary barracks and there were still soldiers inside.

As I entered the burning building and began the search for casualties, the only light was from the fire and my mini-flashlight. I knew what I had to do — I also knew that I wasn't going to like what I would see, and that it would change me forever.

Smoke and soot stirred up by medevac helicopters added to the difficulty finding casualties — I had to literally put my face next to the ground to see what lay there. Clumps of smoldering insulation, boots and uniforms lay scattered everywhere, covered by a mist of blood. At intervals there were pools of blood with flesh and bone fragments. Live electrical wires lay throughout the wreckage. Small arms ammunition cooked off at irregular intervals. In the most heavily damaged section of the

building lay the ugly face of war.

Three men lay within a yard or so of each other; I called several other searchers to help me carry them out. The first casualty had a severely injured arm and shell fragments in his stomach: I checked him in vain for signs of life. The others were obviously dead, as the missile had exploded directly above them. A captain from my villa, along with George Manes (a civilian who was *Stars and Stripes'* Middle East bureau chief) and another soldier helped me carry out the bodies. Other searchers quickly evacuated the other casualties. Those with less urgent wounds were gathered in the parking lot outside.

One young soldier was crying over the death of a close friend who had been standing right in front of him when the missile exploded. He thought he had seen a Patriot missile intercept the Scud over the barracks, and kept asking why

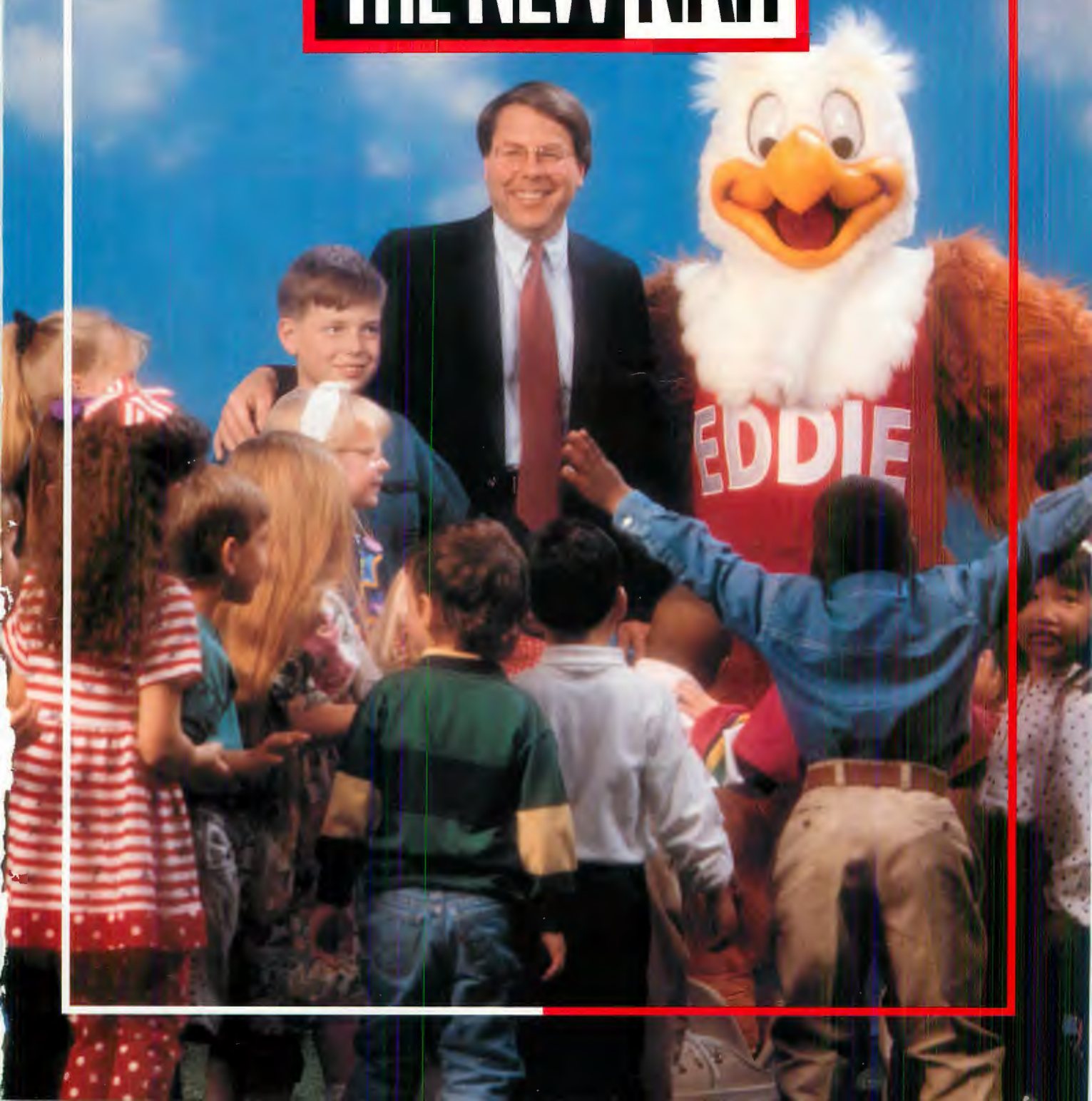
the Patriot had to hit it. "If it hadn't of hit it, it would have passed on by," he said.

He was barefoot, and broken glass lay everywhere. I gave him my canteen, comforting him the best I could, then went back into the building to try to find him a pair of boots. The building was a total disaster. Smoldering duffel bags, weapons, mail and shoes were scattered everywhere. By the time I returned with a pair of boots, he had been evacuated, so we continued the search for casualties. Much of the debris was too large to move by hand, and had to be bypassed after we called for survivors. After the building was checked and rechecked, we began policing up the weapons. Later, I helped secure the building against looters and the curious.

Several hours later, a head count revealed that most casualties were assigned to the 475th Quartermaster Group, a reserve petroleum-supply unit from Pennsylvania, in-theater only

Continued on page 68

THE NEW NRA



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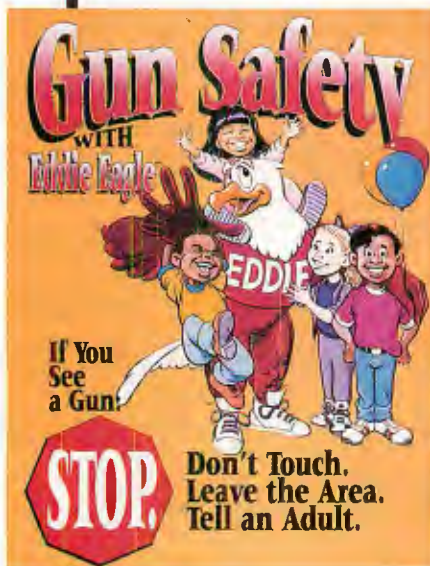
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Firearms are present in about half of all households – and kids in just as many. That's why NRA's revolutionary Eddie Eagle child gun-safety program teaches kids how to avoid gun accidents. If you think it's worthwhile to teach young kids what to do if they see a gun, you've got an ally in the new NRA ... America's leader in gun safety for all ages.

IF YOU BELIEVE AMERICAN WOMEN HAVE A RIGHT TO APPROPRIATE SELF-DEFENSE OPTIONS AND THE RESPONSIBILITY TO EXERCISE THAT RIGHT SAFELY, THE NEW NRA IS FOR YOU. CALL 1-800-438-4NRA NOW.



SKILLS FOR WOMEN

Almost three of four American women will be victims of crime in their lifetimes. And more live alone, or parent families alone, than ever before. But women who choose to own a firearm for self-protection don't have to go it alone. Free NRA Gun Safety and Personal Protection Seminars give thousands information and education about the responsibilities of safe firearm handling, storage and use.



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If you're one of America's 20 million hunters, you'll find a lot to like about the new NRA. Deer expert Dick Idol leads the way with the NRA Whitetail Tour and SuperClinics, a series of standing-room-only shows bringing you the latest state-of-the-art intelligence to develop your skills. NRA also leads the way keeping more public hunting lands open to hunters everywhere.



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NRA

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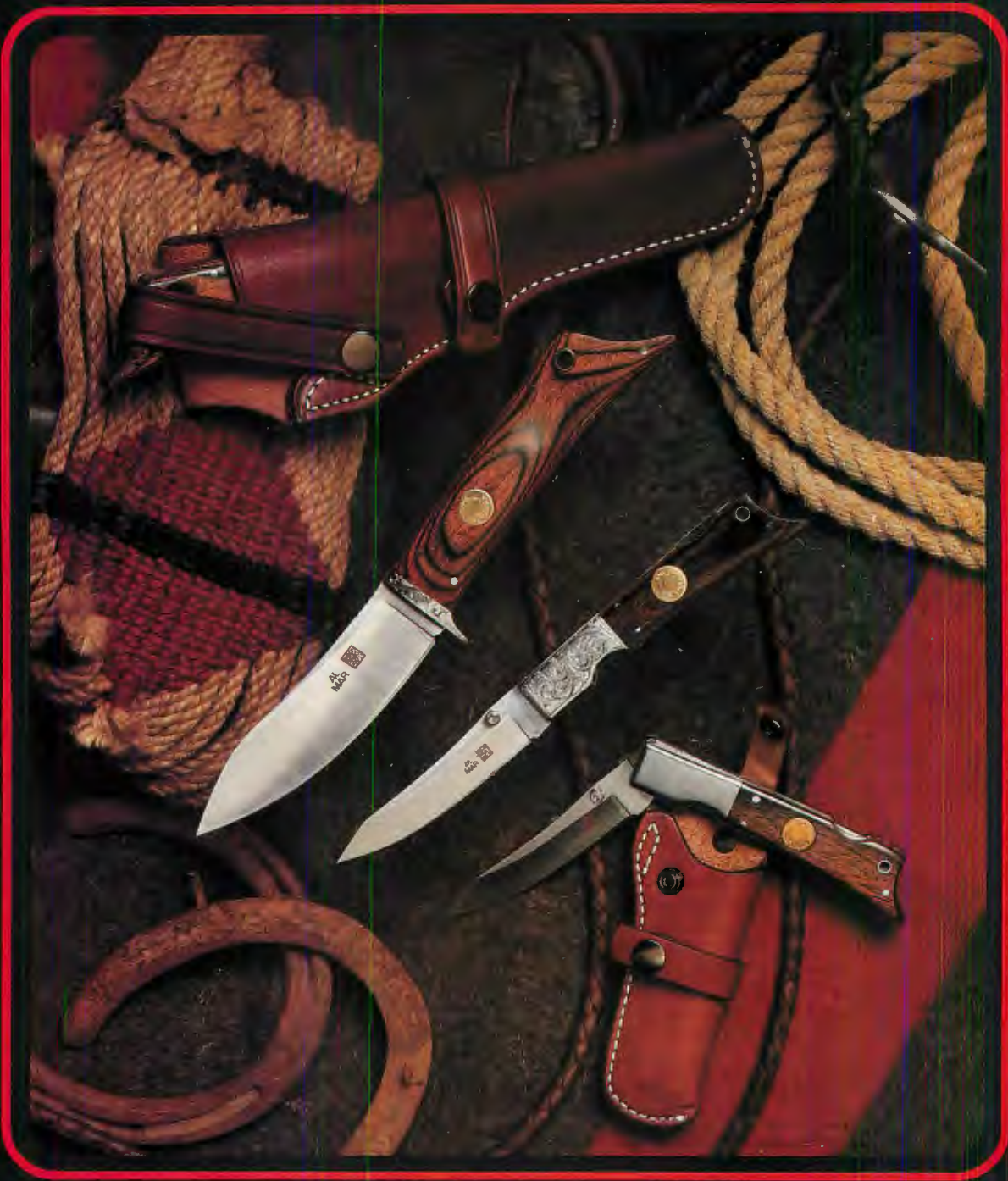
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WORLD SITREP

Turkey

Turkish jets attack two Kurdish guerrilla targets inside northern Iraq in retaliation for Kurdish attacks in southeastern Turkey and urban areas that leave 21 dead. U.S. condemns Kurds' attacks as "terrorism" and praises Turks' response as "restrained."

Britain

IRA takes responsibility for huge bomb blast in London financial district on night of British election that kills three and injures 91. Blast is termed largest in London since World War II ...

Czechoslovakia

The on-again, off-again Czech-Syrian T-72 deal appears on again. The deal is now said to be for 500 tanks, twice as many as previously reported, and has a new twist: About one-third of the order is reportedly to be passed on to Iran (which has been reported buying large numbers of T-72s from Russia). Ships carrying consignments of T-72s for Syria were detained by Germany and Denmark earlier this year ...

Libya

Yasir Arafat's plane goes down in sandstorm killing three crew members. Arafat escapes with cuts and bruises ... **Libyan** government orchestrates demonstrations at embassies of U.N. Security Council members who voted to impose sanctions on Libya.

Panama

U.S. bases in Panama will be closed by year 2000 on schedule, according to Cheney... **Noriega**, whose drug trafficking led to U.S. invasion, was convicted on drug charges in Miami ...

Spain

Basque terrorist group ETA suffers major blow when high ranking member of the organization gets careless and leaves address book at pay phone. Police obtain it and as a result are able to arrest a substantial part of the leadership ...

Peru

With armed forces' support, Fujimori stages what's described as an "internal coup," suspending the constitution, dissolving parliament and jailing opposition leaders. He says action is necessary in order to fight Shining Path guerrillas and drug traffickers. Bush suspends \$300 million in U.S. aid ...

Ethiopia

Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front, whose troops captured Addis Ababa and dispatched the Marxist regime last year, has insurgents of its own to contend with. Oromo Muslim fundamentalists have mined road to Somali port of Berbera, forcing the EPRDF to escort vehicle convoys. At least eight armed groups are active in area ...

Pakistan

Pakistani Foreign Secretary Shahriyar Khan admits Pakistan has the components and capability to assemble at least one nuclear weapon. Khan tells U.S. officials that Pakistan has frozen the production of nuclear bomb cores. Pakistan's continued refusal to sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty caused U.S. Congress to cut off \$573 million in aid in 1990. Destruction of existing cores is a major condition for aid resumption ...

Germany

Germany slashes defense spending 27%. Cuts include Leopard-3 tank ... East German documents reveal that Warsaw Pact had developed a plan to overrun Western Europe in 35 days in a campaign that would make extensive use of tactical nuclear weapons. The plan, which was the scenario for a 1983 military exercise, called for attacks against NATO on five fronts, and involved four fronts reaching the French border by Day 15 and forces reaching the Spanish border by Day 35. Existence of the plan was revealed by German Defense Minister Gerhard Stoltenberg. A 1989 version of the plan used in an East German army staff exercise called for the use of 76 nuclear weapons in Schleswig-Holstein.

Ukraine

President Kravchuk orders sailors of former Soviet Union's Black Sea fleet to take oath of allegiance to Ukraine, but gets spotty compliance as Russia continues to contest control of fleet, which is based in Sevastopol. Ukraine also starts to create an independent naval command for the day when it gets some or all of fleet...

Russia

Prototypes of next-generation Mikoyan and Sukhoi fighters are reported to be undergoing flight testing. The aircraft, known as Counter-Air Fighter, and Air Superiority Fighter by the Pentagon, is being portrayed as Russia's answer to the U.S. F-22 Advanced Tactical Fighter, but Russian lag in avionics and computer-aided design, among other technologies, suggests they're more likely intermediate rather than next-generation designs...

Israel

U.S. investigating team clears Israel of charges that it sold Patriot missile technology to China ... Separately, U.S. refuses to grant export licenses for components used in Israel's Python 3 air-to-air missile ...

Thailand

The last active group of 259 Communist Party of Thailand guerrillas surrender to government forces in exchange for farmland, ending an insurgency that has gone on for 30 years ...

Iraq

Iraqi armed forces reportedly move Scuds north of 36th parallel as part of large-scale military deployment in Kurdish regions, apparently in preparation for general offensive against Kurds. Under terms of Gulf War cease-fire, Iraqis are not supposed to have Scuds, and deploying them north of 36th parallel is a violation of U.N. Security Council directives ...

Iran

Iranian F-4s and F-5s stage air strikes on Iraqi-based Iranian rebel group, losing one plane. Iraqis scramble fixed-wing jets to repel raid, in the process violate Gulf War cease-fire ... North Korean freighter Dae Hong Ho delivers cargo of Scud-C missiles to Iranian port of Bandar Abbas. U.S. Navy attempted to track the ship in order to give Bush the option of ordering an intercept, but claims to have lost track of the vessel. Missiles were believed bound for Syria, but Iran likely cut itself in on the deal ...

Cyprus

U.N. Security Council tells Greece and Turkey to start settling their differences over Cyprus, because withdrawal of Canada and Denmark from peace-keeping force on the island could precipitate force's disintegration by end of year ...

Bosnia-Herzegovina

Serbs in north Bosnian town of Bosanski Brod claim Croat and Moslem militias massacred 15 people in a nearby village; Serbs retaliate by shelling town's center. Bosnia-Herzegovina's 4.3 million people are 44% Moslem, 33% Serb, and 17% Croat. Populations are intermingled and intermarriage is high; observers say civil war will result in "room-to-room fighting" ...

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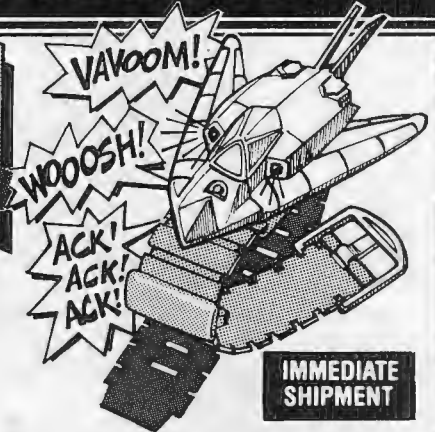
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Full Size Medal	MM-295	24.95
Mini Medal	MM-296	18.95
Ribbon, full size	RI-296	2.95
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BATTLE BLADES

by Greg Walker

The world of custom knives is a large one, with more than 2,500 makers in the United States alone. Over the years, ownership of a custom knife has become associated with high prices. Top-name makers of Damascus steel knives charge as much as \$100 per blade inch, which adds up when you're buying a 9.5-inch fighting bowie to hang off the old combat harness.

Fortunately, there are still hundreds of hardworking custom knifemakers whose work is readily available for less than \$200 per knife. I have had the opportunity to evaluate several of these makers' combat offerings.

But why choose a custom knife over a production blade to begin with? Because accomplished knifemakers will lend that extra time and care necessary to make a good knife even better.

Not motivated by cost considerations per thousand units, the custom maker will select the proper steel for the knife's intended use, as well as the most appropriate fixtures, handle material, grind and blade pattern. He will either heat-treat and temper the blade himself or have it sent out to a professional who will guarantee that the knifemaker's specifications are met. Finally, he will make sure the knife has matched grind lines, clean fittings and truly sharp edges.

There are many good knives on the shelves, but custom-built blades always seem to have a different feel and look to them. And their performance is often just a bit better than the average sheath or pocketknife.

But is a custom knife a practical purchase if you're serious about using it in the field? Not many of us have the strength of will to accept losing a \$750 fighter somewhere deep in the bush — or having it lifted by someone, or, even worse, what if a situation demands the blade be left behind?

I'd have no problem abandoning a Gerber MkII, knowing its replacement would cost me less than \$50 at the PX back on base. My Damascus Smith

Randall Martin offers this straight fighter in ATS-34 stainless steel with green Micarta scales, at either an 8-inch or 9-inch blade length. Martin can be phoned at 203-630-0683. Photo: Weyer International



camp bowie is a different story.

It's like jumping out of a C-130 wearing a Rolex. Until the wristwatch falls off and plummets unnoticed to the drop zone 1,800 feet below, it's a pretty cool thing to do. Afterward, your less fortunate friends will extract a certain amount of deserved payback by showing you their \$35 Timexes, the ones they always wear on a jump.

On the other hand, it is possible to tote a quality custom knife with all of its inherent advantages, but purchased at a price both acceptable and affordable. Indeed, the custom knives mentioned below are somewhat less expensive than many production blades normally considered as combat/camp tools. This is especially true with Japanese production knives. As price increases are imposed by Japanese makers, the cost of an average fixed-blade fighter is nearing the \$200 mark. So, if owning a custom "Made in U.S.A." combat knife appeals to you, this may be the time to start looking.

J.W. Townsend (2073 Highway 200, Trout Creek, MT 59874) has long specialized in solid working/using knives. He prefers 440C stainless, 01 high-carbon and commercial Damascus steels for his combat/camp blades. I've worked with one of J.W.'s straight fighters for nearly six months, finding it well designed, exceptionally well made and most practical for its intended purpose. It sells for \$175, with a black rough-out leather sheath included.

Bill Buchman (63312 South Road, Bend, OR 97701) is one of central Oregon's most popular knifemakers. Bill concentrates on working knives, including hunters and skinners. He turns out several extremely practical combat patterns, one designed by Al Mar and made exclusively by Buchman. Bill forges 440C and Sandvik 15N20, using primarily hardwoods for his handles. All of this maker's sheaths are hand-formed and sewn in the shop using naturally tanned leather, Buchman's favored scabbard material. He will make a Kydex sheath if one is required. Prices begin at \$125 for a Buchman knife.

We've mentioned some of the blade steels available; at this point there may be a question or two about what steel is "best." Some makers swear by

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It has come to our attention that CBC 7.62mm x 51mm cartridges from lots dated 1975 may pose a serious safety risk. The specific cartridges in question bear the headstamp "CBC 7.62 75."

We hereby provide written notice to you that a potential hazard may exist with respect to outdated CBC 7.62mm x 51mm cartridges. There is a reported risk that such cartridges may cause excess pressure upon discharge and could result in serious bodily injury or damage.

Under no circumstances should these cartridges be used, given to anyone or sold.

There have been isolated reports of rifles bursting as a result of excessive pressure in what appear to be these outdated CBC cartridges. An independent testing lab reports that it detected a peak pressure that they estimated to be in excess of 130,000 CUP, in one out of a batch of 20 outdated CBC 7.62mm x 51mm cartridges dated 1975, that it tested.

CBC 7.62mm x 51mm cartridges are manufactured solely for military use in several nations around the world. CBC has not exported any of these cartridges to, nor sold any in the United States. These particular cartridges are not intended for civilian use under any circumstances.

In addition, a warning is issued for any CBC 7.62mm x 51mm cartridges from any year that bear a label on the packing material with the Spanish word "reengastada."

That label was not affixed by CBC, and its application to ammunition is not yet clear.

Anyone who has, or believes they have, CBC 7.62mm x 51mm cartridges from lots dated 1975, or CBC 7.62mm x 51mm cartridges from any year with the word "reengastada" on the packing label should immediately contact the dealer from whom they bought the rounds, and call the following toll-free phone number:

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forged Damascus, others by stainless steel. Many knifemakers grind their blades, where others commit to only forgings. Which way should you, the buyer, go?

According to Jimmy Fikes, considered by many professional knifemakers to be this country's most talented and knowledgeable bladesmith, there is only one measurable difference between a forged Damascus blade and one hammered from a quality high-carbon tool steel, and that is price. In my experience at *Fighting Knives* magazine, a well-made stock removal knife will perform equally with a well-made forged blade.

In addition, there are several production knives whose blades are

A well-made stock removal knife will perform equally with a well-made forged blade.

stamped out by machine and then ground by hand that all perform admirably in the field. The key is using quality materials, careful and appropriate heat treatment, a high degree of craftsmanship and that extra 15 minutes needed to make the average knife a great knife.

Overall, I advocate a blade of either high-carbon tool steel or stainless steel for a reasonably priced combat knife. Carbon steels such as 01, A2 or D2 make excellent working blades, with ATS-34, 154CM and 440C good choices for a stainless steel model. Proper blade care will eliminate concerns about severe rusting or pitting, but if you'd rather worry as little as possible about such matters, choose a stainless steel blade to begin with. I've carried carbon steel blades for years now, but I've used stainless steel blades as well, with little difference noted between the two types.

A final note on custom knives: Remember that a knife is first and foremost a tool. Combat blades are expected to see hard use during their lifetimes, and are expected to be perhaps lost or left behind in the line of duty. A custom knife can be a welcome addition to your harness or "go bag," if you select it with thought and care. No such knife should tax your wallet more than \$350, and there are outstanding purchases available for far less.

The two makers mentioned above are respectable sources of quality, affordable custom bladeware. And there are many more. Some checking around will be worth your while. One thing is for sure, custom work equals cutlery class, any way you cut it. ✂

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Medic Thomas Cole was wounded by an AK-47 round that tore into his left cheek just below the eye. He cleaned and bandaged his own wound, then ignored it so he could tend to the other wounded.

FIELD OF HEROES

7th Cav Stands Fast at LZ 4

by Bob Poos

Photos by Henri Huet

Author's note: The official After Action Report on what became known as the Fight At LZ 4 is short, not completely accurate and inadequate in describing what happened on 28 and 29 January 1966 in Binh Dinh province, Republic of Vietnam. As the only surviving civilian present during those two days — the other, Associated Press photographer Henri Huet, who took these memorable photos, was killed later in the war — I would like to pay a larger tribute to those A Company troopers who fought, died, suffered, endured and ultimately triumphed in that place.

It began with a single shot, doubtless fired by a lookout posted atop one of the tall palm trees in a grove that A Company's point element had just entered. He'd intended it to be for effect as well as a signal, because it passed about shoulder high and directly between me and a tall, lanky machine gunner walking 3 or 4 feet to my left.

Every man in the company hit the deck as one; these troopers of A Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment knew exactly what that single round signified. Most of them were veterans of the Ia Drang Valley/Chu Pong Mountain campaign of the previous September. Bloody Ia Drang had already become legendary among U.S. forces in Vietnam.

Up to this first shot, it had been a pleasant day, a nice walk in the woods. A rare day in Vietnam, warm and sunny but not uncomfortably hot or humid. The terrain had been easy, mostly flat with gentle rises here and there; sparse vegetation, scrub bushes and small trees, acres and acres of rice paddies with the occasional clump of coconut palms planted by villagers long ago. Quite different from the mountainous jungle the 1st Cavalry Division had become used to since arriving in-country back in mid-1965.

After throwing back North Vietnamese General Vo Nguyen Giap's attempt to cut South Vietnam in two with the Cav's strategic and tactical victory at Ia Drang, a Cav base camp was established at LZ Dog. From there, they intended to clear regular Viet Cong (VC) formations as well as those of their North Vietnamese allies from the An Lao Valley and the central

coastal/Piedmont area which composed this part of Vietnam. Up to now, Cav reconnaissance patrols and company-sized sweeps had encountered little resistance. That was to change. Today.

Henri Huet and I were lucky, if that's the word for it, to be there for this development, because being on hand for such things was our job as combat photographers/reporters for the Associated Press.

The Cav was a great outfit to cover for ambitious newsmen because it had a lot of helicopters, almost 500 of them, vastly more than any other unit, which meant that you always had mobility and communications. Furthermore, it was by now the acknowledged elite Army division in 'Nam and was always sent to the most likely scene of enemy contact.

Cav troopers were friendly and did not resent the presence of newsmen — if the visitors stayed out of the way and





3rd Platoon came under heavy weapons fire as it crossed the paddy field at LZ 4. Some men just stopped running and sank down, others plunged headfirst, wounded but crawling toward the distant bank.

carried their own weight. Both of us had been on several Cav operations and were known and accepted. The troopers liked to tease me about being a former Marine; they liked to talk with — and listen to — Henri, because they knew they could learn from him.

Henri knew more about Vietnam and its wars than any of them, more than any American in the country. He had been born and reared there of a French father and Vietnamese mother. Henri's father had been a planter and big game hunting guide. Henri had walked over much of the ground in II Corps many years before, tracking tigers, elephants and wild buffalo. He'd done his French army service as a photographer with the Foreign Legion. With all that behind him, besides his years with the Associated Press, there was much to be learned from Henri Huet and the soldiers knew it. Henri was always a welcome guest at any American unit he chose to join.

The people we found ourselves among that day were obviously top-of-the-line examples of the American Army in Vietnam. They moved steadily; well spaced, alert yet not tense, talking quietly with us and among themselves, eyes always sweeping the ground around. They carried clean weapons with which they maintained an easy familiarity.

Bloody Ia Drang Veterans

Among them were a platoon sergeant named Joe Carbonneaux, a 15-year Army veteran who when asked for his hometown simply said "the Army," and a tough, cheerful young rifleman named Jesus Garcia. Both had walked into, and better still walked out of, the Ia Drang.

Carbonneaux mentioned the name of the

village just ahead — actually it was a collection of a half-dozen huts rather than a village complex — An Thi. There had been, he remarked, intel reports that the VC and perhaps the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) had been using it as a headquarters site because of its strategic location midway between the jungled mountains to the west and rice-rich coastal plain behind us to the east.

A Company paused atop a slight rise and contemplated its destination about a half-mile ahead. At this distance, it looked like nothing more than a mass of trees, a dark spot among the green and brown squares of rice fields surrounding it. As the troopers neared the location, the trees began sorting themselves out into the neat lines of a coconut grove planted long ago by some forgotten French landholder. There was the smell of fresh water, and to the right, a large bamboo thicket.

The pace slowed as a point man entered the first trees and the troopers, not needing orders to do so, spaced themselves further apart. They were alert but relaxed; young men experienced at their trade.

Then came that first shot fired in the battle of An Thi/LZ 4. For a long moment it was perfectly silent. Not the whisper of a voice, no rustling of palm fronds in the breeze, not an insect chirp broke the quiet. Then an M16 round cracked — it was as if someone had flicked a switch activating every infantry weapon in the North Vietnamese inventory: The clearly identifiable sharp racketing sound of AK-47s, short coughing bursts from RPD light machine guns, scattered explosions of rocket-propelled grenades and, louder than all, blasts from 12.7mm heavy machine guns.

A Company's veterans had heard them all before and could identify the peculiar sound of each weapon. There were as yet no incoming mortar rounds, but no one doubted that they would soon follow.

A Company answered with the American arsenal: M16s responded to AK-47s, M60s to RPDs and the bigger-wheeled North Vietnamese heavy weapons; M79 grenadiers triggered their bloop tubes.

Captain Joel Sugdinnis skillfully deployed his three platoons into a curving perimeter, his command group with 2nd Platoon in the middle of the palm grove, 1st Platoon to the left at its edge and 3rd Platoon inside the bamboo thicket. Sugdinnis, a West Point graduate and Ia Drang Valley veteran, moved his men steadily forward, firing, sprinting ahead to

cover, fire team by fire team, squad by squad.

Henri was with 2nd Platoon, ignoring the bullets cracking around him while rapidly snapping photos. Like the soldiers did, combat photographers kept apart from reporters during firefights, so that if one got hurt or killed, the other could continue to function. So I elected to join 3rd Platoon in the bamboo grove about 30 meters to my right. It proved to be a good decision, although an unpleasant journey, during which I could clearly see gouts of earth jump up and splinters fly from trees, while hearing hundreds of bullets, all too close.

After about 15 great, leaping bounds, I heard someone yell, "Hit the deck, goddamn it! You're drawing fire," and I literally dove ahead as if into water and found myself sprawled next to a platoon sergeant who grinned and said, "Not a bad run. I think maybe you broke some records."

Ringside Seat At A Firefight

Then began an experience I had not before encountered in a year of war in Vietnam and never would again, there or anywhere else covering conflicts in Central America, Africa and South America. I had a ringside, 50-yard line, center court, press box — safe — view of an infantry firefight.

Unseen in the bamboo, 3rd Platoon was not taking a single incoming round. Both 2nd Platoon in the center and 1st Platoon on the far flank were caught up in a furious exchange of bullets and grenades with an obviously superior-sized enemy force. But 3rd Platoon remained, for the time being at least, untouched even though we lay just a few meters away from the center platoon.

It was fascinating: I had the feeling I

Wearied troopers guard captured Viet Cong in sandy trench fortification during battle.



was caught up in some sort of dream or as if I were an invisible, godlike witness to a drama of human tragedy. I saw men killed instantly, men jerk and scream when wounded; I could clearly discern faces twisted in concentration as they fired at targets seen only by themselves, ignoring incoming rounds or perhaps oblivious to them, intent on their work.

It occurred to me that it was almost obscene to feel as I did, but glances around me at troopers' faces revealed that they, too, were hypnotized by the sight of such drama, horror, courage — and calm. I saw Carbonneaux moving around talking to troopers, directing fire, repositioning men.

All of 3rd Platoon played, for the moment, a role as interested but non-participant observers. Some yelled encouragement as if spectators at a boxing match, but most watched silently, entranced by the spectacle and absorbed in it. All except the platoon sergeant lying next to me.

He observed the scene with a cold, detached professional eye. After awhile he remarked, "This ain't going to last much longer. We're gonna' have to outflank 'em, 'cause I think we're badly outnumbered and flanking them's our only chance to get this thing straightened out. Look over there." He pointed through an opening in the bamboo.

For the first time, I noticed that the bamboo, the palm grove and the cleared area beyond it all fronted on a flooded rice field, about 30 meters wide and a couple-hundred meters long. On the other side, on higher ground, the ramparts of a long, curving trench ended at an old sunken road almost directly ahead of 3rd Platoon, and disappeared over to the left into thick bush and trees. Movement in the trench revealed communist positions.

We were in a perfect position to execute a flanking movement; a command to do so would undoubtedly come soon. Sugdinnis was meanwhile maneuvering his other two platoons into positions from which they could deliver concentrated fire, and, hopefully, keep the enemy force occupied and unaware of the uncommitted platoon.

Crouched on one knee, leaning on an M16 in his left hand, Sugdinnis talked into the handset of a PRC-25 radio for a couple of minutes, handed it back to its operator and moved out of sight. The call had been directed at 3rd Platoon. Its commander, a lieutenant I hadn't talked to yet, beckoned at the platoon sergeant by me who crawled over, listened to some brief directions, nodded and crawled back.

Fix Bayonets

He grinned and said, "We are gonna go across that paddy and hit 'em from the flank like I thought. So you've got an option, Mr. Newsman. You can either go across with us, or stay here. All by yourself. Entirely up to you."

As he spoke, the lieutenant stood up, pulled out his .45 Colt, waved it forward

After Action Report

SUBJECT: *Combat Operation After Action Report*

NAME: *Operation Masher*

DATE OF OPERATION: *24 January 1966 — 4 February 1966*

LOCATION: *Vicinity Bong Son, Binh Dinh Province, RVN*

OPERATION MASHER — *The target area was Bong Son. The terrain is composed of vast rice fields on the South China seacoast at 14 degrees, 30 minutes latitude. In the west, the Da Dan hill mass rises to a height of 663 meters. The brigade intelligence estimates of VC/PAVN units amounted to four battalions with possible reinforcement capability of two regiments. Fair weather was experienced for several days; five had rain. On 28 and 29 January, very poor weather conditions prevailed, which greatly restricted movement by helicopters, and, though some sorties were conducted, the use of Tac air was impossible much of the time.*

The operation began with 2/7 Cavalry moving to Bong Son and clearing the area north toward a proposed Command Post/Forward Support location.

As 2/7 Cavalry moved north, they met with light but increasing resistance. January 27th provided the first indication by group contact of the possible presence of PAVN units in the TAOR. Mortar and artillery fire were placed on VC reported to be in khaki uniforms.

The 28th was D-day. The 2/7 moved to LZ 4 in contact with at least one PAVN company. Captured documents later revealed the presence of a battalion ... prisoner interrogation indicated that 2/7 Cavalry was fighting the 7th Battalion of the Quyét Tam Regiment. 2/12 Cavalry moved to the vicinity of LZ 4 and contacted other elements of the 7th PAVN Battalion, Quyét Tam Regiment.

and yelled what sounded to me like something out of an especially bad war movie: "Fix bayonets ... Charge! Charge! Go! Go! Let's get over there!" And then he plunged out of the protective bamboo screen and into the flooded field. The platoon leapt up and followed, yelling, cursing and some few firing weapons from the hip.

Just like the rest of them, the last thing in the world I wanted to do was splash out into that paddy. But even more, I didn't want to stay back there all alone. Decisions are surprisingly easy to make at such times, and despite myself, I found that I was about in the middle of the platoon sprinting, if that's the word for it, through calf-deep water and ankle-deep mud. I've seldom wanted anything as badly as I wanted to reach that distant shore.

At first, 3rd Platoon's move took the communists by surprise, but like the Cav,

they were experienced at this business and before the platoon was halfway across the paddy they put it under the fire of every man who could bring a weapon to bear.

Water around 3rd Platoon started kicking up in spouts where bullets hit, or in small geysers where RPG rounds impacted. The zing-whang-whops of bullets breaking the sonic barrier seemed too thick to penetrate; men began falling with splashes in the green, muddy stagnant water. Some just stopped running and sank down as if stopping for a rest. Others plunged headfirst, wounded but thrashing and crawling toward the distant bank.

Everyone was shouting and yelling, but voices were almost drowned out by the roar and clatter of weapons and explosions of grenades. Directly ahead of me, a man went down and, without conscious thought, I hurdled him and kept on running. I gained the dry ground and dove down behind an M60 team.

The next moment I became aware of only one thought: It would be better to be shot than to keep on living with the knowledge that I hadn't helped the man I had leapt over. Despite a terrific instinct to remain under cover, I started crawling back into the water toward him. It was with great relief that I saw he had hardly paused after hitting the water, but with a combination of swimming, crawling and just thrashing ahead he'd already closed most of the interval. I reached out a hand and pulled him up to dry ground. He stood and plunged into the brush after the other riflemen. I learned later he hadn't been hit, just slipped in the muck and fell.

I crawled back to join the M60 gunners who had placed their weapon on the rim of the sunken road and were preparing to fire. One of them tapped me on the helmet and pointed ahead. It was a memorable sight: We were looking directly into and down the length of a trench dug parallel to the paddy we'd just crossed. In it, spaced evenly and firing, were North Vietnamese riflemen and, here and there, gunners manning RPDs.

I've Been Waiting The Whole War For This

The M60 gunner grinned and said, "Motherfucker, I been waiting the whole war for this." He touched his gun off and the North Vietnamese went down like dominoes. The gunner was a thorough professional. He fired in short bursts — when all the enemy were down, he depressed the machine gun muzzle and fired again into those still moving.

The gunner emptied the belt, his assistant fed in another and then they leapt up and into the trench; I was right behind them. There were still North Vietnamese alive in there; those that were grabbed the bodies of the others and dragged them off into the bush.

Continued on page 68

SALVADOR'S UNSUNG HEROES

SF Advisers Fight for Recognition

Dear Sir:

I've just finished reading the article by Greg Walker concerning recognition of Special Forces veterans who served in El Salvador ["Blue Badges of Honor," February '92].

As a charter member of the "Double Nickel" and, I believe, the first A-Team leader to take a team into El Salvador during the war, it is gratifying to see a quality piece like this that points out the

dedicated, honorable service and sacrifices of many SF troops.

I could write pages about the early days of the war and our experience there. Unfortunately, the same common theme would be present — U.S. State Department sensitivities that denied reality, and semantics that ignored and neglected those of us on the ground (and in the most danger).

In 1980, a few of us from 3/7th SF Group (Airborne) were in-country conducting what the Carter administration called "non-lethal" training. We covered a lot of ground, to include Morazan and Chalatenango provinces, where fighting was the most intense. Initially, we had to make due with U.S. Military Group (MilGroup) issue .45 pistols, so worn out they were falling apart.

We were so low-profile at the time

that U.S. Ambassador to El Salvador Robert White even denied in an interview with a national news network that there were any "Green Berets" in-country. This was technically correct, as we didn't bring our distinctive headgear with us.

In March 1981, my team initiated training of the Atlacatl Immediate Reaction Battalion. My previous experience in El Salvador led me to immediately protest the "terms of reference" forced on us that, among other things, limited our weaponry to "defensive" side arms. I was told to just follow orders, so naturally I did the right thing by exercising the moral obligation owed to every soldier committed to a hostile fire environment — I made sure my team was appropriately armed at all times due to the high threat (translation: with M16s, M60s, M79s, grenades, etc.). I was actually more concerned about my own chain of command finding out that we had enough armament to fight off a battalion of "Gs" than I was about our security.

During the course of our six-month mission with the Atlacatl, the entire team was on an assassination hit list, by name — a good indicator of the El Salvador armed forces being penetrated. The extreme rightists targeted us as well. We were shot at so many times we stopped counting. Needless to say, I didn't report these little incidents, because the "this is another Vietnam" crowd in our own embassy would scream for us to terminate the mission and stay out of El Sal.

Greg Walker is right. United States veterans of El Salvador deserve credit for a combat tour. The Department of the Army message that authorized the wear of the right shoulder sleeve insignia or "combat patch" for Southwest Asia [the Gulf War] describes criteria that were easily met by those of us in El Sal. My team received "combat pay" and each of us has an affidavit signed by the MilGroup commander that states we were exposed to hostile fire. Credit for a combat tour with



Illustration: Susan Edson

attendant accoutrements can become important for promotion and retention in these times of force reductions.

Combat patches and Combat Infantryman's Badges [CIBs] aside, the SF soldiers and other military personnel who served with honor in El Salvador deserve a "well done" from the commander in chief. Let's also not forget those personnel who established the Regional Military Training Center in Honduras that trained a significant number of Salvadoran troops. I know what the NCOs on my team did and I will never forget their professionalism, dedication and compassion. There are countless Salvadorans, military and civilian, who are alive today because of their presence.

El Salvador has a long way to go under the new peace, but the picture would have been much worse without the members of the "Double Nickel."

Sincerely,
Dave Morris

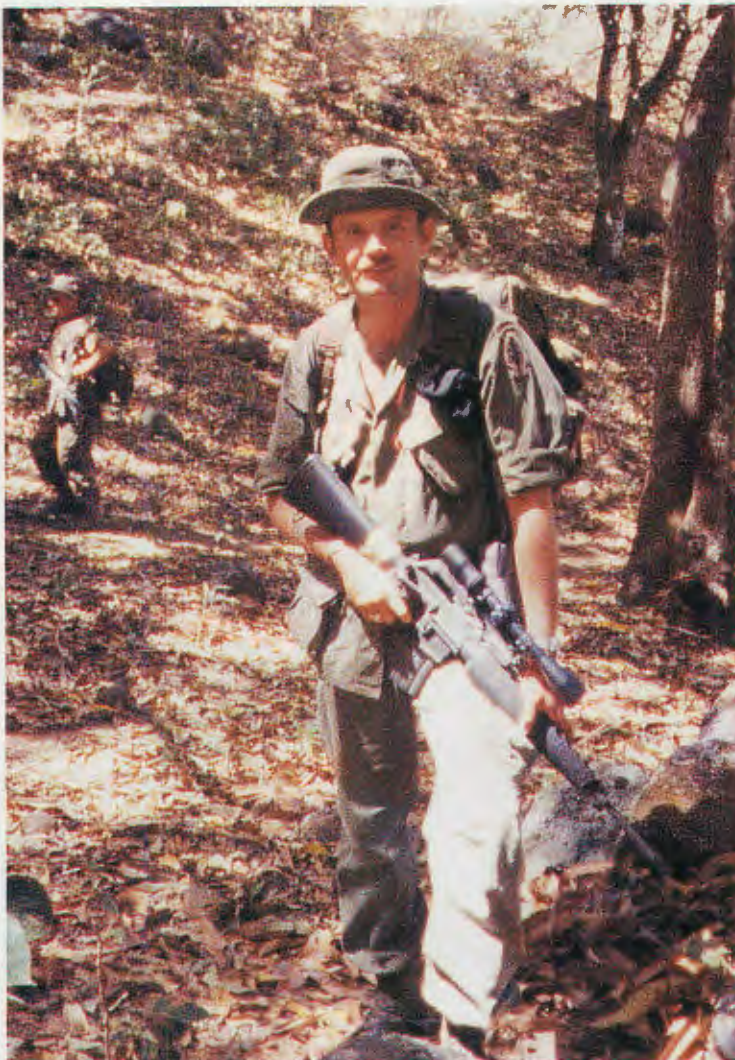
Since Greg Walker's "Blue Badges of Honor" ran in February, there have been a number of interesting developments. Following is an update on the situation at press time.

After *Soldier Of Fortune's* publication of "Blue Badges of Honor," two complete document packets were forwarded to Republican senators Bob Packwood and Mark Hatfield of Oregon. Senator Packwood has since filed a formal inquiry with the U.S. Department of Defense regarding possible awarding of the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal (AFEM) to U.S. military personnel assigned to the MilGroup in El Salvador between January 1979 and December 1991; Sen. Hatfield went directly to General Colin Powell's office.

On 9 March 1992, a staffer for the chairman's office, Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), responded formally to both senators' inquiries. This response in part states, "as to Mr. Walker's specific inquiry ... the AFEM is reserved for those U.S. military operations designated by the JCS as involving a significant number of U.S. service personnel who encountered foreign armed opposition or for whom hostile action was imminent." The correspondence was signed by Colin L. Powell, Chairman, JCS.

From the above response, it appears the JCS position is that presently an AFEM is

not being considered in this case. It also appears whoever formulated this response on behalf of Powell is completely ignorant of the number of U.S. service personnel who encountered "foreign armed opposition," and that U.S. advisers in El Salvador drew "imminent danger" pay authorized by DoD precisely because it was



Greg Walker with his "defensive" scope-mounted M16 during company's movement toward Conchagua, El Salvador. Apparently the Joint Chiefs of Staff are unaware that U.S. soldiers drew imminent danger pay and encountered "foreign armored opposition" constantly throughout their tour. Photo: courtesy Greg Walker

substantiated by the U.S. MilGroup in El Salvador that "hostile action was imminent." Those involved in this issue at the grassroots level consider the JCS response completely unsatisfactory.

Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) has provided direct assistance at the national level through a formal resolution that petitions the Department of Defense to award an AFEM with the following criteria:

- The individual must have been assigned to the U.S. MilGroup in El Salvador sometime between January 1979 and December 1991.

- The individual must have been so assigned for 60 days or more.

- The individual must have been entitled to draw "imminent danger" pay during this assignment.

This resolution was passed unanimously on 2 April by local VFW Post No. 1642 (Bend, Oregon), and has been forwarded to the state organization. After it passes at the state level there will be a final vote at the 93rd National Convention this August.

Such an action confirms the VFW's belief that those who fought in El Salvador are due the proper recognition of their efforts through the awarding of a AFEM.

Further, the VFW points out that the AFEM has been awarded 21 times to date, with several campaigns involving no shots fired at all, others with far fewer U.S. casualties, and still other instances involving substantially fewer U.S. service personnel than were deployed to El Salvador over a 12-year period.

In fact, an AFEM was awarded to Colonel "Bull" Simons' White Star Mobile Training Teams (7th SF Group) for their effective counterinsurgency work in Laos (1961-62), and to operators from the 10th SF Group who were recognized for their efforts during the peacekeeping mission in Lebanon (1983-1987). Clearly, those who served in El Salvador meet the criteria for the AFEM.

Any SOF readers who would like to support this effort may write Richard Cheney, Secretary of Defense, Washington, D.C. 20301-1300, urging an AFEM be awarded to the veterans of El Salvador under the criteria mentioned. Such efforts will have a great impact upon this issue.

Finally, since Captain Morris wrote me, I've received numerous letters from other El Salvador vets, depicting incidents of combat involving U.S. advisers not mentioned in the original SOF story, including the unreported wounding of one American adviser during a helicopter reconnaissance mission.

Should other veterans of this conflict have stories of their own which they'd like to tell, please send your letters to Greg Walker, P.O. Box 6281, Bend, OR 97708. A file will be maintained with the intent of using such documentation to support both senatorial and VFW efforts to see the AFEM awarded for the 22nd time.

— Greg Walker ✉



GULF WAR'S S

Yank Fliers Take the War to Iraq

by Dale B. Coopers



When Iraqi armor rolled into Kuwait, the 363rd Tactical Fighter Wing (TFW) at Shaw Air Force Base, South Carolina, was told to saddle up and get to the Middle East as fast as its fleet of F-16s could fly: There was fear in Washington and Riyadh that Saddam Hussein might not be content to occupy just Kuwait.

The 17th Tactical Fighter Squadron (TFS) had the first and only U.S. Air Force iron-bomb-carrying jets capable of slowing or stopping Saddam's march into Saudi Arabia on-site a week after Kuwait

was invaded. The 17th maintained that role until the 33rd TFS arrived along with A-10s, F-15Es and F-111s from other stateside and overseas bases.

In the early morning hours of 17 January 1991, Special Operations (SpecOps) forces launched a direct-action mission to assist the opening of the air campaign against Iraq. At 0238 hours local time, eight Army AH-64 Apaches and two Air Force MH-53 *Pave-Lo* helicopters attacked the early-warning ground control intercept sites in far western Iraq, destroying them. It took the Apaches only four minutes to "pluck out the eyes" of Iraq's Soviet-supplied air defenses.

In the next six weeks 126,645 air sorties, orchestrated to hit Iraq around the clock, delivered 96,000 tons of bombs, rendering Iraq senseless and defenseless. This is the story of some of those airmen who literally bombed Iraq back to the Stone Age.

Barksdale To Baghdad And Back

It was well known that B-52s dropped tons of gravity bombs on Iraqi ground forces in southern Iraq and Kuwait, but not until a year later did the

Pentagon disclose that B-52 bombers had launched cruise missiles at Iraqi targets in the opening hours of the Gulf War.

Seven B-52s from the 2nd Bomb Wing of the 8th Air Force, armed with 39 non-nuclear cruise missiles, took off from Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana, on 16 January 1991 in what the Pentagon calls "the longest air combat mission in history." The supersecret sortie lasted 35 hours from takeoff to landing and covered more than 14,000 miles. The B-52s were

refueled four times. Thirty-five AGM-86C cruise missiles were launched at eight targets, including power generation or transmission facilities and military communications sites inside Iraq.

Boeing Aerospace, which makes the nuclear-version cruise missile, modified it to carry high-explosive warheads at a cost of \$380,000 per missile. The Pentagon does not describe the effectiveness of the



SECRET SORTIES

air-launched cruise missile, except to say the Air Force considered them "very effective."

Stellar Stealth, Tactical Tomahawks, Lots O' Planes

At H-hour, nine F-117 pilots, having passed undetected through Iraqi air defenses, struck selected targets in Baghdad. Precision-guided bombs hit commo buildings, command and control facilities and intelligence organizations.

Throughout the war, F-117 stealth aircraft flying by night were the only manned aircraft to attack targets in central Baghdad.

In addition to cruise missiles that were air-launched against high-priority targets in Iraq, the U.S. Navy sea-launched 106 Tomahawk missiles from the Persian Gulf and Red Sea against military headquarters, communications links and power distribution centers in Baghdad.

The first salvo of Tomahawks was fired at 0130 from the cruiser *USS San Jacinto*, some 700 miles away in the Red Sea. Once missiles were on their way to Baghdad from the *San Jacinto*, the *USS Bunker Hill*

in the Persian Gulf launched its Tomahawks. Battleships *USS Missouri* and *USS Wisconsin* also opened fire.

Partially blinded by the first attacks, Iraq's air defense system was overwhelmed by the sheer number of attacking aircraft. In the runup to H-hour, 668 aircraft from the U.S. Air Force, Army, Navy and Marine Corps, along with aircraft from the Royal Air Force, France, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait took off for targets in Iraq.

Nothing approaching the depth, breadth, magnitude and simultaneous nature of this air assault had been previously directed at Iraq. Early impact of the strategic air campaign was significant. Iraq's internal refining and production capability was shut down, thus limiting Iraq's ability to supply fuel to its tanks, planes and war machine. Here is a look at a typical sortie:

A Wakeup Call For Saddam

In the early morning hours of 17 January, an "AM" package of 20 aircraft (16 F-16 Falcons and four F-15

Cruise missile, reworked by Boeing from nuclear configuration to carry conventional explosives, drops free of B-52 and heads for Iraq. Photo: USAF

Eagles) took off from their base in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) well before sunrise for a night rendezvous with their cell of tankers.

The sun was just starting to light the horizon as Lieutenant Colonel Ronald W. Perkins led the package across the Iraqi border. The plan called for Perkins, commander of the 33rd TFS, to bomb an oil refinery in south-central Iraq at the crack of dawn.

"Two things could happen," Perkins said then, "either we hit them so hard that they're confused and we're going to walk in and walk out, or we've just stirred up a hornet's nest and it's going to be ugly."

Perkins' package, including elements from the 17th TFS, crossed the Iraqi border at 0610 local. The first bombs smashed into the refinery 20 minutes after sunrise. "We blew the hell out of it, burned it to the ground," said Perkins, whose strike force came out without a



Top, L to R: Captains Sherrill Daugherty, Phil Purcell and Mike Hudson. Front: Colonel Raymond Huot, commander 363rd Tactical Fighter Wing. Photos: courtesy of subjects.

scratch. They rendezvoused with tankers and returned to base safely.

"Guys would be lying if they said they weren't scared," Perkins added. "I was, but fighter pilots are very good at compartmentalizing: Once you get into the cockpit and begin doing familiar things, you can put that [fear] away."

As Perkins and the "Claws" (the 33rd's nickname) and "Hooters" (the 17th) crossed the Iraqi border, they wondered when the Iraqis would open fire with Anti-Aircraft Artillery (AAA) and surface-to-air missiles (SAMs), but this a.m.-attack apparently caught Saddam's soldiers by

surprise. "I don't think they even knew we were there," Perkins said.

Lieutenant Colonel Chip Utterback, operations officer for the 17th TFS, was worried more about refueling at night than getting shot to pieces over his target. Utterback was expecting a real shoot-'em-up. But it never materialized. "You can buy a lot of neat toys, but if you don't know how to work 'em, they're not going to be effective," he said. Utterback credits the destruction of Iraq's integrated defense system in the first few days of the air war with making his job much easier.

"When we took away their command and control, all they had was a bunch of boys on the ground shooting big guns — very lethal guns — but they didn't have the information they needed to take advantage of the technology that they had," Utterback said. "The plan to go after his [Saddam's] integrated air-defense system, command and control, communications, ended the war for him in the first 24 hours. That told us we were going to win the war," according to

F-16Cs from Shaw AFB, South Carolina, wait turn to belly up to bar at Casey 135 Saloon. Photo: USAF

Utterback. "However, how quickly the allies would win wasn't determined in the first few days." He contends that Saddam, the media-dubbed "madman from Baghdad" really blew it by not committing his air assets.

What, If Anything, Was Saddam Thinking?

Colonel Raymond P. Huot, commander of the 363rd TFW, can't imagine what Hussein hoped to achieve by not using his air force. "I believe he felt his forces would be sufficient to inflict enough losses on us that we would call it quits and go home," said Huot, who brought up the rear of the "PM" package that struck a military airfield on the outskirts of Baghdad on the opening day.

Although the Iraqi air force didn't come up to challenge American warplanes, the fact that they could have caused Utterback and his wing men to maintain a constant vigil for MiG-21s, a small fighter low in technology but launchable from any airfield in Iraq. "When you're fighting a foe with large

The "madman from Baghdad" really blew it by not committing his air assets.

numbers of aircraft, that's what you worry about — the guy that sneaks in unobserved like a snake in the grass," Utterback explained.

Captain Tom Wheeler flew on Utterback's wing. "There's a little line out there in the desert where the Arabs have actually marked their borders in the sand," Wheeler recalled. Like many other pilots, Wheeler had a couple of close calls. Once his engine "popped" (quit) in the midst of 57mm AAA that was bursting 400 feet to starboard.



"I thought I had been hit for a second," Wheeler said, "because when your engine pops, it feels like a giant hand has hit the bottom of the plane." Utterback yelled at him to, "get your altitude up, there's AAA in the area, get your altitude up!" but Wheeler was speechless. He was able to restart the engine. But that close call paled in comparison to his aircraft being struck by lightning.

A Shocking Experience Over Kuwait

"We were just crossing the Kuwaiti border on 17 February when I heard a lot of static in my headsets and heard some snapping sounds in the cockpit similar to science experiments in school, those little balls you touch in the lab that go *Zaapp*," Wheeler said. He was not aware that his F-16 had been struck by lightning until his left shoulder touched the canopy.

A grounding wire in the aircraft apparently failed to dissipate the lightning strike and charged the canopy. When ink pens in the shoulder pocket of his flight suit touched the canopy, Wheeler lit up like a Christmas

tree. "It felt like someone hit me in the chest with a baseball bat. Boom!!! My feet came off the rudder pedals, my hands came off the stick and throttle and I screamed for a minute.

"When I grabbed the stick, Smack!!! It hit me again," Wheeler added. He didn't need to touch anything in the cockpit a third time to know something was wrong. After jettisoning his bombs, Wheeler diverted to a Saudi airbase where he received medical treatment. Electrocardiograms showed Wheeler was all right, but still a little goofy, so he spent the night in the hospital.

Son Follows In Father's Footsteps

Captain Phil Purcell didn't have any difficulty at the oil refinery, but Purcell, who wears a silver MIA/POW bracelet with his father's name on it, did have a close call while returning from "Scud hunting" in northwestern Iraq. The father he never knew was the first Air Force officer to be shot down over Vietnam, in 1963 while flying a modified B-26 bomber.

Ironically, a Scud attack prevented most of the tankers tasked to support Purcell's flight from getting airborne.

"When we hit a tanker on the way, it wasn't carrying enough gas for everybody,"

Purcell recalled, so the leader of Purcell's four-ship decided to divert to a base for fuel and let the other half of the package continue on to the target.

When flight lead Capt. Mike Hudson arrived over the airbase, it was "crumped" over with weather, so he had to take his flight high and start looking for another place to set down. At this point, problems began cropping up in Purcell's plane. One by one, he lost all of his navigational aids, including his inertial navigation system — the whole ball of wax.

Two other wingmen fell behind as Hudson and Purcell pressed on, but they were able to bootleg a tanker that was trying to catch up to the fuel-starved formation. Through a break in the clouds, Hudson saw a base below and radioed he had an emergency: "a *real* emergency."

Leading Purcell down, Hudson landed on what he thought was a parallel runway, only to later learn he had landed on a taxiway — with less than 200 pounds of fuel in his tanks. "We landed with less gas on the gauges than the tolerances of the gauges could measure," Hudson said. "In other words, we were out of gas, and that's the scariest I was in the whole war."

Utterback remembers getting a call from Hudson explaining what happened when he heard sirens sound a Scud attack. "While Hudson ran for cover, Purcell sat under his plane eating a sandwich,

oblivious to what was happening all around him," Utterback said.

Before the Gulf War ended, tankers code-named Shell, Mobil, Texaco, Exxon and for other brand names of gasoline would pump more than 110-million pounds of fuel (8 pounds to the gallon) into 46,000 aircraft. From August 1990 to March 1991, U.S. forces in the area of responsibility used 1.8 billion gallons of jet/diesel fuel.

And Home

Return of the so-called "AM" package from the oil refinery inside Iraq to its base in the UAE was a joyous occasion on the opening day of hostilities. There were a lot of "high fives" for returning pilots as they climbed down from cockpits and greeted their ground crews.

"I can't describe the overwhelming feeling of pride all of us on the ground felt as we watched the formations of aircraft return to base and pitch out overhead for landing," said Lt. Col. Billy Diehl, who waited to lead the "PM" package to Baghdad.

"They were standing in the waiting room when we walked in," Perkins said, "and I think the fact that we came back from Baghdad without a scratch was a big morale booster for them."

But no one in the PM package, including Diehl, expected a cakewalk. Saddam Hussein had almost 750 fighter planes, 16,000 missiles and 7,000 pieces of AAA at his disposal. Impressive numbers on paper, but not very impressive in the air and on the ground, as you'll read next month when the leader of the PM package tells what it was like to fly through a "ring of steel" around Baghdad and come back out without losing a single plane.

A regular contributor to SOF, Dale B. Cooper covered the Gulf War at ground level, and continues his coverage with after-action reports. See his story on the "Mother of All Bombs," on page 60 of this issue.



CUBAN COCAINE CABAL

Narco-Stalinists Plot to Subvert America

by Mitchell Henderson

In 1984, I was hired by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) to guard an injured suspect at a hospital in Tampa, Florida. This wasn't unusual — I was then working on the Tampa police force and officers were often hired on off-duty time for such tasks. What was unusual was the story I heard from the patient I was guarding.

It had all started on 17 September 1984, when the banana boat *Voce* arrived in Port Manatee, Florida, from Turbo, Colombia. During a routine inspection, U.S. Customs officers found 14 pounds of cocaine stashed aboard. They then arranged a controlled delivery to the intended recipients in order to arrest them.

The cocaine was delivered to four Cubans at a hotel near the airport. After paying a \$23,000 transportation fee for the cocaine, the Cubans went out to the parking lot and got into their car. Before they could close the doors, customs and DEA agents sprinted to the car to arrest them. The driver, Elices Rodriguez, and the front passenger both grabbed the agents attempting to

arrest them, and Rodriguez hit the gas. As the car sped forward, one of the agents fired a shot into Rodriguez' side to make him stop the car. Rodriguez went to the hospital, the other three Cubans went to jail. The agents went home uninjured, and the following morning a DEA agent came into Tampa police's tactical division (Vice) and hired me to watch Rodriguez.

Double-Dealing Drug Dealer

The story got interesting when I learned Rodriguez was not just a drug dealer, but was also an agent of the *Direccion General de Inteligencia* or DGI — Cuba's version of the CIA. This piqued my interest, so that evening I asked Rodriguez to give me some details.

Although he was in pretty bad shape, Rodriguez seemed glad to have someone to talk to. He admitted he was a DGI agent and claimed he wasn't just smuggling cocaine into the United States to get money to pay for intelligence operations. The dope was also intended as a weapon used to weaken the moral and social fabric of America.

Rodriguez said flooding the United States with

drugs also would "raise the political consciousness of Americans." I asked him to explain that. He said that most people do not oppose the government because the government does not bother them. But if you give people something they really like to do that is illegal, then they will begin to fear and resent the government. The more people use drugs, the more the government will crack down. The more the government cracks down, the more people will feel oppressed and unfree. Rodriguez said this had been official DGI policy for years.

Cuban Spy Ops

I then asked Rodriguez what kind of operations the DGI had going in the United States. He said they were to try to become well established in Cuban communities as workers, businessmen or whatever. They specifically tried to infiltrate anti-Castro organizations, and also to get jobs with public utilities or police departments. With enough agents in these positions, the DGI could wreak havoc in south Florida if the United States went to war with Cuba. These agents also helped other DGI agents get established and were on call to perform any tasks DGI needed done.

I found what Rodriguez said to be very disconcerting, especially the part about the DGI infiltrating police departments. The Secret Service usually enlists the aid of local police to protect the dignitaries in their care. During the 1984 presidential campaign, I worked on teams protecting George Bush, Walter Mondale, Gary Hart

DEA reports reveal that a group including Ché Guevara and Chilean communist leader Salvador Allende met in Havana to set up drug smuggling through Cuba as far back as 1961. At that time, the cocaine processing business was centered in Chile.





Drug invasion of the United States has been by boat and plane, and much of the contraband has passed through Cuba. Here a U.S. Customs helicopter chases a suspected drug-carrying vessel. Photo: Marty Casey

and Jesse Jackson. Although I thought some of the candidates were scary in their own right, I believed I was protecting the citizens' freedom of choice. If Castro had moles within police departments, then he would be in a position to usurp the right of Americans to make their own decisions.

Although what Rodriguez said was news to me, I soon learned it was not new at all. In early 1983, five Cubans were convicted in Miami of conspiring to smuggle Quaaludes and marijuana from Colombia via Cuba. Also indicted in the case, but unavailable for trial, were the president of the Cuban Institute of Friendship with the People; the Cuban ambassador to Colombia, who was also a communist party central-committee member; and the counselor to the Cuban ambassador to Colombia.

In May 1983, James H. Michel, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, testified before the U.S. Senate that the Cuban communist party presidium and Fidel Castro had decided to use Cuba as a bridge for narcotics smuggling to help the Cuban economy and to "contribute to the deterioration of



American society." At the same hearing, another witness stated that the 1980 Mariel boatlift had been used to ship some 7,000 DGI agents into the United States, and that these in turn were to help drug smugglers inundate America with illegal narcotics. By April 1984, treasury officials in Miami estimated the Cuban government earned \$700 million annually from the illegal drug trade.

Furthermore, there is documented evidence of the Cuban drug connection as far back as 1961. A DEA report leaked in 1982 revealed a group including Ché Guevara and Chilean communist leader Salvador Allende met in Havana to set up drug smuggling through Cuba.

A few drug-laden planes like this never make it to the United States. Unfortunately, most of them do. Photo: Marty Casey

While in La Paz, Bolivia, in April 1984, I was told by a prominent individual that Allende used money derived from cocaine smuggling to help finance his 1964 presidential campaign against Christian Democrat Eduardo Frei. Frei won the election, leaving Allende in debt. With the help of the growing cocaine trade, however, Allende amassed enough funds to pay off his debt and to finance his 1970 election win. Once in power, Allende used cocaine trade earnings to purchase arms



Fidel Castro



Pablo Escobar



Raul Castro

Ricardo Bitonick — Once "ambassador at large" for Panama in Washington, in early 1980s purchased (with drug cartel financing) INAIR Cargo Lines. He testified at Noriega's trial that he was asked by Escobar to fly drugs out of Nicaragua as well as Panama.

Fidel Castro — President-for-Life of Cuba and accused drug smuggler.

Raul Castro — Fidel's brother and Cuba's Minister of Defense. Colombian drug trafficker Lehder Rivas testified he met with him personally to discuss drug trafficking.

Aldo Santamaria Cuadrado — Member of Castro's tribunal in his drug purge. Also under 1982 federal indictment in Miami for smuggling of marijuana and Quaaludes.

Pablo Escobar — Medellin cartel boss who rose from dealing small bags of coke to \$2 billion fortune. He won alternate seat in Colombia's congress before being forced to flee to Panama.

Danny Fowlie — Drug trafficker and landowner in Costa Rica. Sentenced to prison, as were his two sons, for drug trafficking. Bought land in Pavones, Costa Rica, from Vesco.

Norman Le Blanc — Vesco's partner.

Manuel Noriega — Deposed dictator of Panama, currently in prison in Florida.

ROGUES'

for communist people's militias.

In 1973, the Chilean army decided enough was enough and Allende was overthrown. Until Allende's downfall, most of the cocaine smuggled into the United States was processed in Chilean labs. Pinochet, his successor, put an end to the cocaine processing business in Chile; after 1973 the bulk of cocaine processing and smuggling operations shifted to Colombia.

By 1975, Cuba was already getting a share of the Colombian drug trade. Cuba's ambassador to Colombia held a meeting in Bogota with all the major traffickers to offer them safe passage through Cuba, for a fee. Part of the fee was to carry arms on their return trips to the M-19 guerrillas, an emerging force of leftist Colombians supported by Castro.

The traffickers went for the deal and there was an exponential growth in the drug trade to the United States. Cooperation between the drug lords and Cuba became so flagrant by 1981 that Colombian President Julio Cesar Turbay broke relations with Cuba and kicked the

Cuban ambassador and his thugs out. By then, however, the Cuban government had another middleman to take the ousted ambassador's place — fugitive American swindler Robert Lee Vesco.

Secret Documents, Assassins & Robert Vesco

The relationship between Vesco and Castro had a direct effect on Cuba's involvement in narcotics smuggling, as venal "businessman" Vesco took over negotiations with various drug dealers on Castro's behalf.

I had some personal experience with Vesco's tangled business dealings. During the summer of 1989, a hotel and real estate company owner named Loren Pogue from Golfito, Costa Rica, asked me if I would run his businesses for about six months so he could take a vacation in the States.

Just after I started to work for Pogue, he was convicted of attempting to murder several squatters on some Pacific Coast property near the Panamanian border. Pogue had been helping the owner, Danny Fowlie, sell his properties because

Fowlie was stuck in a Mexican prison awaiting extradition to the United States for drug trafficking. Fowlie wanted to sell his property before the Costa Rican government confiscated it under their narco-trafficking laws.

Although Pogue only got probation for his part in the shootings, he decided it was time to break his ties with Fowlie and purged his files of everything relating to him. I retrieved some of them from the garbage.

Included in the documents was a letter from one of Fowlie's companies paying the Cuban government for overflights. The files also contained telegrams linking Fowlie to Norman Le Blanc, who was Vesco's partner in the looting of Investors Overseas Services and a co-defendant in the securities fraud indictment.

Fowlie had met Vesco in 1972, shortly after Vesco had fled to Costa Rica to avoid securities fraud and Watergate-related charges. Vesco engaged Fowlie as a scout to find and arrange business deals.

After Vesco was kicked out of Costa Rica in 1978, he and Le Blanc fled to the Bahamas where Vesco also became partners with Colombian drug lord Carlos Lehder Rivas in shipping cocaine into the United States.

Vesco eventually moved to Cuba and coordinated Costa Rica's drug trade from his office in Havana. In 1981, Vesco connected Lehder Rivas with Raul Castro to work out a money-laundering and transshipment deal to use Cuba for funneling drugs to the United States.

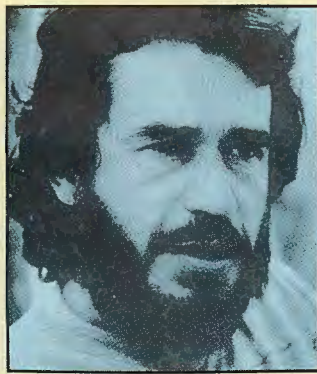
According to the documents, Fowlie's

By 1975, cocaine processing and smuggling operations had shifted from Chile to Colombia, while Cuba had offered major traffickers safe passage through Cuba if they would carry back arms to Colombian communist M-19 guerrillas.





Manuel Noriega



Carlos Lehder Rivas



Robert Vesco

GALLERY

Found guilty of drug trafficking by U.S. court.

Manuel Pineiro — Head of Cuba's intelligence service. Lehder Rivas testified he met with him as well as Castro regarding drug trafficking.

Loren Pogue — American hotel and real estate company owner in Costa Rica. Accused of attempted murder of squatters

on Fowlie's land in Costa Rica. Convicted of assault and sentenced to two years probation.

Rafael Caro Quintero — Notorious Mexican drug lord. Ordered murder of DEA agent Kiki Camarena in 1985.

Carlos Lehder Rivas — Convicted Colombia cartel baron, currently serving life sentence plus 135 years for drug traffick-

ing. He was a star witness at the trial of Noriega.

Barry Seal — Drug smuggler who, after capture, agreed to be a DEA informant on the Medellin cartel. He flew numerous missions in this double-agent role.

Robert Vesco — American fugitive financier wanted in the United States since 1972 on charges of swindling \$224 million from a Swiss-based mutual fund. Now living in Havana and advising Castro on the drug trade and U.S. affairs.



Drug enforcement officials have a round-the-clock job trying to stop the flood of drugs into the United States. Photo: Marty Casey

pilot on the Cuban overflights was one Werner Lotz, the same man who flew Mexican drug lord Rafael Caro Quintero to Costa Rica to hide out after he had been identified as the person who had ordered the 1985 torture and murder of U.S. DEA agent Kiki Camarena in Guadalajara, Mexico. Before he was captured by Costa Rican authorities, Quintero and his girlfriend were seen on Fowlie's property in Pavones. They were relaxing over drinks at Fowlie's beach cantina.

By the time DEA agent Camarena was murdered, Vesco was helping at least two drug cartels smuggle into the United States: the Medellin cartel of Colombia and the Guadalajara cartel of Mexico. Furthermore, Fowlie was evidently one of Quintero's connections to the Medellin

cartel. Fowlie's pilot, Lotz, used to deliver cocaine to Quintero in Mexico.

The Sandinista Connection

Vesco and Cuban DGI official Manuel Pineiro also paid the Sandinistas a visit in 1984 to gain their cooperation. What led Vesco and Pineiro to Nicaragua was the unreliability of Panama's General Manuel Noriega. Noriega was doing deals with both the Medellin Cartel and

Castro.

For the Medellin cartel, Noriega allowed transshipment of cocaine through Panama for a fee, and had pilots fly some of it up to the States. The general even mediated between the M-19 guerrillas and the Medellin cartel to gain the release of cartel member Jorge Ochoa's sister, kidnapped by M-19 members.

For Castro, Noriega allowed Panama to be used as a conduit for guns to the M-19 guerrillas. Of course, Noriega broke deals with both; he busted a cartel cocaine lab in

the Darien jungle in May 1984, and earlier he tipped the United States off to a Soviet army brigade stationed in Cuba.

However, Noriega's raid on the Darien lab was to the advantage of Castro and the Sandinistas. After it was destroyed, the Sandinistas established a large cocaine processing lab south of Managua to take its place. DEA informant Barry Seal reported being contracted by the Medellin cartel to fly cocaine base from Bolivia to Nicaragua for processing. Once processed, the cocaine would be flown directly to the United States or pass through Cuba, depending on its destination. Seal also documented Sandinista complicity in the

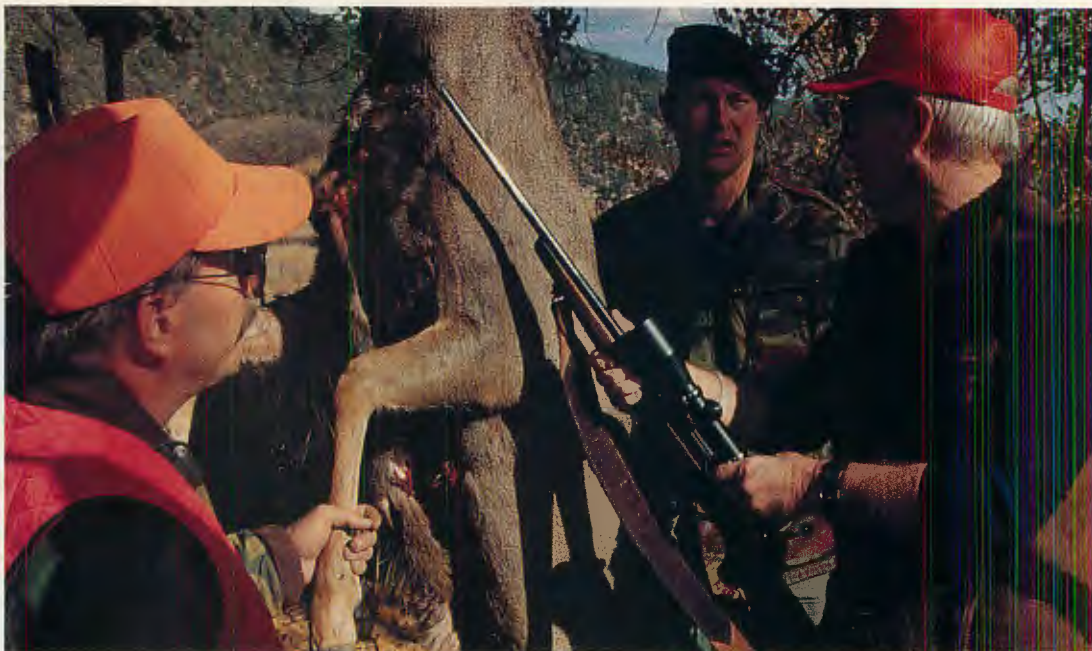
drug trade when he photographed Sandinista officials supervising a cocaine shipment at Los Brasiles airfield in Nicaragua.

In late May 1984 another cartel figure, Pablo Escobar, asked Ricardo Bilonick if his INAIR airline (which was started with cartel capital) could fly drugs out of Nicaragua. Escobar told Bilonick that he had the same deal with the Sandinistas as he did with Noriega. Apparently Noriega had developed cold feet and did not

By 1981, when Colombian government cracked down on drug lords, Cuba made agreements with Manuel Noriega in Panama and later with the Sandinistas in Nicaragua to give safe passage for drug traffickers.



Continued on page 71



SOF HUNTING SUCCESS WITH PENETRATOR SCOPE

When *Soldier Of Fortune* Editor/Publisher Robert K. Brown bagged his mule deer buck on last year's hunt, he was using Steiner's new Penetrator riflescope. This scope was designed to maximize light transmission in the red spectrum and beyond, going into the infrared spectrum. The scope's optics reflect green and blue light, which reduces the blue haze that hides game, while allowing extra light transmission in low-light conditions.

The Penetrator scope gave Brown the extra few minutes of shooting light he needed to drop his buck (with a single shot, at 300-plus yards using a Ruger Ultralight .308). Retail prices for Steiner's Penetrator riflescopes range from \$899 to \$1,479. Their success has prompted the company to introduce a Penetrator binocular series as well. For more information on the Penetrator contact: Pioneer Marketing & Research Inc., Steiner Optics, Dept. SOF, 216 Haddon Ave., Westmont, NJ 08108; phone: 800-257-7742.



CUSTOM GLOCK MINI-LASER

Applied Laser Systems has introduced the Custom GML mini-laser aiming device, developed especially for Glock semiautos. Activated by pressure on a touchpad, the Custom GML sends a bright red dot to the target for pinpoint accuracy to an effective range of more than 100 meters. The Custom GML laser is the smallest in the world, measuring just 1/2-inch in diameter and 3/4-inch in length. It retails at around \$385. For more information, contact: Applied Laser Systems, Dept. SOF, 2160 N.W. Vine St., Building A, Grants Pass, OR 97526; phone: 503-479-0484.



IR GAME FINDER

The Game Finder is a perfect example of technology helping the outdoorsman — it's an infrared heat detector that remotely senses temperature changes. Although originally designed to help hunters find game that fled after being wounded, the Game Finder can be used to find people lost in the woods, or by security teams sweeping a building, or even on a combat patrol. Think how many ambushes could have been spotted in advance with the Game Finder during the Vietnam War! About the size of a flashlight, it can be carried in a pocket or pack and retails for about \$300. For more information, contact: Game Finder Inc., Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 658, Huntsville, AL 35801; phone: 205-533-5004.

TWO FROM DESANTIS

DeSantis' new inside-waistband holster features a provision for a spare magazine, along with a strapless design to give its user a smooth draw. The holster is made from turned-and-padded ballistic nylon and sells for about \$20.

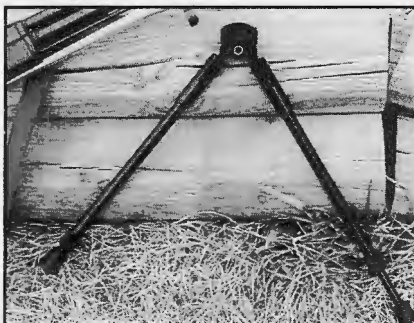
Also, DeSantis has a new Stakeout ankle rig for pistols or revolvers. The ankle strap is an extra-wide 5 inches, with a breathable elastic band. The design of the Stakeout enables a variety of handgun sizes to be carried; it can be worn for both right- and left-hand carry, and sells for about \$30.

For more information, contact: DeSantis Holster & Leather, Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 2039, New Hyde Park, NY 11040; phone: 800-424-1236.



B-SQUARE ULTRALIGHT "SWIVEL" BIPODS

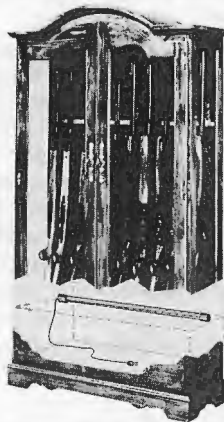
For any type of long-range shooting, whether for varmints or large game, bipods often make the difference between a clean kill and a disastrous miss. B-Square has developed a new "swivel" bipod available in two variations: One mounts on the barrel while the other attaches to the swivel stud. Neither type requires any gunsmithing to install, yet they offer excellent stability. The legs of the bipods fold up for a clean profile, and lock down when in use; the extensions are spring-activated. They sell for about \$60. For more information contact: B-Square, Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 11281, Fort Worth, TX 76110; phone: 800-433-2909.



FREEMAN'S TARGETS

Practice makes perfect, which is why law enforcement agencies have been putting more and more emphasis on good-guy/bad-guy targets. Until now, these targets have been expensive because they are usually printed in color. But Freeman's Targets has developed a black-and-white series of seven different targets: These are reasonably priced (a set of 50 or less costs 72 cents per target, more than 50 are 65 cents each) and will provide inexpensive practice targets for SOF readers who shoot on police or combat courses, or who simply want to maintain their proficiency. Three of the targets are good guys, four are bad guys.

Freeman's also has the new 24x36-inch silhouette target with the vertical kill zone. Contact: Freeman's Targets, Dept. SOF, 8237 Indy Lane, Indianapolis, IN 46214; phone: 317-271-5314.



GOLDENROD FOR FIREARM STORAGE

Moisture is the enemy of guns. Until recently, there wasn't a lot a gun owner could do to protect his firearms other than keeping them oiled. The GoldenRod, a tube-like device manufactured by Buenger Enterprises of Oxnard, California, uses an energy-efficient, nickel-chromium element to produce a 2- to 3-degree temperature increase for an even flow of warm air circulating in the gun cabinet. GoldenRods are available in 12-, 18-, 34- and 36-inch models for different-sized cabinets. These range in cost from \$35 to \$43.50. For more information, contact: GoldenRod, Dept. SOF, 3600 S. Harbor Blvd., Oxnard, CA 93035; phone: 805-985-0801.

ALPINE ARCHERY

Alpine Archery entered the hunting archery business a few years ago by offering bowhunters well-designed and finely manufactured bows at reasonable prices. The company recently introduced a new bow, the Rebel, with 65% let-off and "power tuff" limbs, retailing for about \$400. I will be using Alpine bows on this spring's African safari and will report on the Rebel's effectiveness in an upcoming column. For more information contact: Alpine Archery, Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 319, Lewiston, ID 83501; phone: 208-746-4717.



WALLS ALL-PURPOSE CAMO

Walls Industries recently unveiled their newest line of camouflage clothing. The line uses Realtree's most innovative pattern yet, the all-purpose camouflage. This new design combines six softer earth tones into a more random matte finish that blends into a variety of terrains. Walls' line of clothing with the new pattern includes regular coveralls, shirts and jackets, along with Walls' 100% cotton ripstop line. All are priced at less than \$50. For more information, contact: Walls Industries, Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 98, Cleburne, TX 76031; phone: 800-433-1765.



Galen Geer is SOF's Outdoor Affairs editor. 



LAOS, HEROIN, The DEA & MIAs

by "Diogenes"

POW/MIA Update, published by the National League of Families (20 November 1991), included a choice bit of news that caught my eye: "During remarks before the Asia Society's recent annual fund-raising dinner in New York, the president [George Bush] included an announcement that relations with Laos would be upgraded to the ambassador level due to increased cooperation on POW/MIA and counternarcotics efforts. This long overdue step should be helpful in generating POW/MIA cooperation."

I picked up the telephone and called the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), reaching the capable individual in that agency who is most intimately associated with Laotian matters. "What counternarcotics efforts?" I asked.

"Damned if I know," he answered.

My question was rhetorical. I have just spent several months studying the Lao narcotics situation, building on information that stretches back more than 25 years. I already know that, apart from producing some 275 to 380 metric tons of opium per year, Laos has also emerged as one of the most significant heroin-producing nations in the world. I also know that the Lao government is far from uninvolved in this progress.

The MAD Company

If you were in Vientiane, Laos, and wanted heroin, you wouldn't have far to look. You could pick up the telephone and place a call to No. 2459, reaching a certain Mr. Cheng Sayavong.

Cheng is director-general of an interesting firm called *Borisat Phathana Khet Phou Doi*, otherwise known as the "Mountainous Area Development Import-

Export Co.," or the MADC for short.

MADC's bona fides are impeccable: The company is wholly owned and operated by the Lao military and is, in fact, a state-run enterprise. Even the U.S. State Department's Bureau of International Narcotics Matters knows that much. It prompted a passage in their 1991 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report: "Companies managed by the military, including the Mountainous Area Development Company, are reportedly involved to a significant degree in narcotics trafficking."

I do not know about Cheng and the MADC because I read about them in some dry government report. I know because I crossed the Thai-Lao border a few years back and personally negotiated the purchase of 250 kilograms of No. 3 "China White" heroin with a senior colonel of the Lao military establishment.

During the course of our discussions, I voiced concerns over DEA operations in the region. Just then the Thai rumor mill was alive with reports of a 25-man DEA team, and I wanted to gauge my source's reaction.

"Oh, you don't worry," he told me, fully convinced he was dealing with a completely amoral American drug smuggler with Corsican connections. "Those are not DEA. Those are bonehunters. We take good care of them. Sometimes more profit than white powder."

He then began giggling and poured himself another glass of Remy.

Laos Exports Heroin, Vietnam Does Not

There is a strange, twisted logic operating up on the Lao border. Some Americans — including some who should know better — have convinced themselves it is alright to look the other way while tons of heroin pour out of Laos, if only the Lao continue to permit us to shower them with money while we dig up crash sites

and engage in a largely fruitless search for 526 missing American military personnel.

This logic demands that a diplomatic upgrade with Laos is "long overdue," while at the same time demanding that there is "danger" in "providing [diplomatic] incentives to Vietnam before they respond seriously on POW/MIA." This last statement comes from the National League of Families, and is the political testament of its chief lobbyist, Ann Mills Griffiths.

Why, we might justifiably ask, does Griffiths think it advisable to take a hard line with Vietnam — lately, most cooperative on the POW/MIA issue — and a soft line with Laos?

Why indeed? The Lao have given precious little by way of cooperation and have milked the POW/MIA resolution process for every nickel they can squeeze.

Why indeed? Take the bureaucratic stranglehold off any DEA Asia-hand and ask him point-blank about Lao "cooperation" in counternarcotics. He'll tell you that Laos is one of the Golden Triangle's biggest problems and that "cooperation" is nowhere to be seen.

And Just What Are Those "Asian Investment Strategies?"

The latest rumor making the rounds is that Griffiths and her erstwhile companion, Richard Childress (late of the National Security Council, now doing business as Asian Investment Strategies, 1700 K St., N.W., Suite 605, Washington, DC 20006) have unspecified business interests in Laos. Rumors like that are difficult to verify, ergo simple to deny.

[Editor's Note: SOF's attempts to contact Richard Childress have been unsuccessful at press time. See Ann Mills Griffiths' statement on facing page.]

But rumors and speculation aside, why is the United States handling Laos with kid gloves? And more important, has the highly touted "War On Drugs" taken a

backseat to the POW/MIA issue? Privately, the DEA says "Yes!" But the private frustrations of DEA line operators don't mesh with the public moves of big management.

After all, U.S. Secretary of State Jim Baker met with Lao Foreign Minister Phoun Sipasuet in Paris on 23 October of last year, paving the way for the ex-U.S. Attorney from Los Angeles, Robert Bonner, who now runs the DEA, to lead a DEA delegation to Vientiane on 4 November 1991.

Charitably, we can say that neither Baker nor Bonner (whose record with Asian cases while U.S. Attorney was miserable) are Asia-hands, as that term is commonly understood, and perhaps the self-deceiving belief in a genesis of high-level cooperations found its way to the White House quite innocently.

ANN MILLS GRIFFITHS RESPONDS

The author has an obvious lack of knowledge of U.S. efforts to obtain cooperation from the Lao government in accounting for missing Americans or combating international narcotics problems. He also lacks knowledge regarding the positions of family members who comprise the League. Our support for upgrading relations between the United States and Laos was by vote of the entire membership, a step recognized by those knowledgeable and long involved as helpful to achieving POW/MIA objectives.

Comparing U.S./Laos People's Democratic Republic efforts to account for the 522 Americans missing in Laos with U.S./Socialist Republic of Vietnam efforts to account for the 1,655 missing in Vietnam is illogical. Vietnam's comprehensive system of collection and retention of remains and records on American POW/MIAs is well known to seriously involved family members and U.S. officials. Despite very difficult circumstances (lack of adequate transportation, communication and accommodations), field operations in Laos are conducted with full cooperation and usually bring results.

Rather less charitably, we might note that while the "suits" (to use the quaint, DEA agent's term of derision for naive managers) are not Asia-hands, they are surrounded by people who are; perhaps they had better start listening to their own experts before they rest any heavy political weight on the wily Lao.

Credit Where Credit Is Due

It has been conventional wisdom to blame the whole heroin mess on Burma and drug lord Khun Sa, but that is a simplistic view.

To be sure, heroin laboratories are flourishing in Burma, chiefly in Mong

Ko/Ko Kang, on the Shan-Yunnan border. This year's poppy harvest is reckoned at some 2,200 tons: a bumper crop. Burmese heroin is the undisputed market leader and the Lao are running second.

But to get at the real picture of heroin production in the region, you have to summon the moral courage to place blame squarely where blame needs to be placed: on the former communist militia forces in Burma; on the ethnic Ko Kang Chinese traffickers in Burma; on the communist Lao military forces.

People used to laugh when you suggested a link between Asian communist parties and heroin production. It was more fashionable to blame the CIA. A leftist historian, Alfred McCoy, wrote a book in the early 1970s that blamed American's heroin woes on American intervention in Vietnam. Lately (1991), he

In Vietnam, field activities have recently expanded, but results have been minimal and manipulated. In 1991, only three U.S. personnel were accounted for as a result of Vietnamese cooperation, the worst year since 1982.

United States reimbursement to the respective government is for the purpose of achieving U.S. objectives, implementing the president's pledge to obtain the fullest possible accounting for missing Americans as a matter of highest national priority.

One could argue the merits of the U.S. government's approach to eliciting greater Lao government cooperation to combat international narcotics trafficking. My view is that cooperation between the two governments has progressed, though much too slowly.

Personally, I have no business interests in Vietnam, Laos or Cambodia, nor am I involved with others with any such activity. I do, however, have serious interest in gaining the cooperation of all three governments to resolve the POW/MIA issue.

Ann Mills Griffiths is executive director, National League of Families.

has republished his original thesis and now blames American aid to the Afghan freedom fighters!

Extremely credible reports from such on-the-ground observers as *Far Eastern Economic Review* correspondent Bertil Lintner and his wife Hseng Nong point to the deep complicity of communist forces in the heroin trade. Such reports also point to the incredible naiveté of American narcotics officials.

A certain Liu Go Shi of Panghsai hosted the DEA and several United Nations narcotics officials at a Mong Ko/Panghsai "drug burning ceremony" on 28 January 1991. This is odd, since Liu Go Shi is a

major-league heroin producer, controlling a majority share of Mong Ko's heroin refineries. He is also the protégé of Pheung Kya-skin, one of Burma's real drug lords.

To Put It Bluntly, The DEA Is Pissed Off

Musing on the above, I called my friend at DEA again and asked him point-blank if Griffiths might be responsible for lobbying the White House into a position that actually helped the Lao heroin traffickers.

"That seems entirely possible," came his guarded reply. We were speaking on company time, after all.

"Well, let me put it another way," I countered. "Are you pissed off at her?"

"Not only yes, but hell yes," was the emphatic answer.

So here we have an extremely sad state of affairs. The blind are leading the blind "chasing the dragon" around Southeast Asia. Top management in the war on drugs isn't listening to the field. Golden Triangle heroin producers give perfectly scripted little shows to the visiting *farang* [foreigners], and then, when the *farang* are safely back in suburban Washington swapping warehouse boasts, the heroin producers quietly resume their poison trade.

In the trenches,

The blind are leading the blind "chasing the dragon" around Southeast Asia.

if you try to point any of this out to the people who should be listening, they mark you as "not a team player" and transfer your sadder-but-wiser ass to Montana. Analysts are being forced to doctor their analyses to fit the party line, and legal secretaries are making high policy.

Recovery of remains and resolution of the POW/MIA problem is a noble effort, to be sure. But there are other, equally noble efforts that should not be discarded.

"Diogenes" is a specialist on Southeast Asian POW/MIA cases and wrote the well-received "Blueprint for a Breakthrough" in our April '92 issue. ✕

STAR PEACE

Most observers of the turbulent scene in the crumbled Soviet empire would agree that the most cohesive element in the Commonwealth, or the individual new states, is the uniformed military. The armed forces have held a privileged and honored place in the societies of the former Soviet Union, whether ruled by czars or commissars.

They have also been feared as the instrument capable of toppling governments, so much so that the paranoid Stalin executed nearly the entire leadership of the Red Army in the 1930s for fear it would rise against him. Brezhnev toppled Khrushchev with the assistance of the Red Army. Small wonder then that Boris Yeltsin strives mightily to maintain the loyalty of the military, while other leaders in the new republics strive to create forces loyal to themselves.

Some cracks have appeared in the solidarity of the former Soviet military forces, to be sure. But these are minor when compared to the fissures that have developed in other former Soviet institutions. The military's refusal to carry through on the clumsy August 1991 coup attempt was responsible for its failure. The objections of the military forced reversal of a Ukrainian demand for control of the Black Sea fleet.

What will happen if the armed forces are called out to quell disturbances and

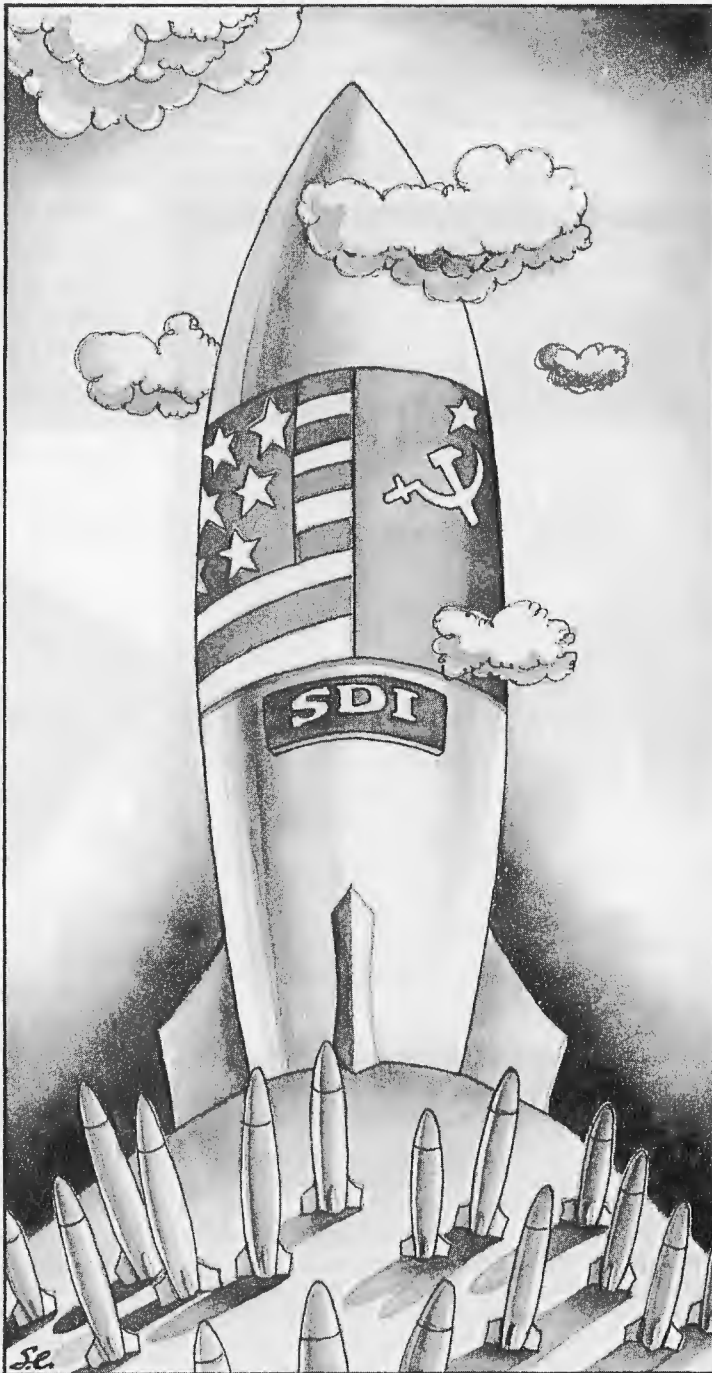


Illustration: Susan Edson

even armed struggles in or between the various republics is impossible to predict. However, we can be certain that military leaders have prepared plans to cover many such contingencies. Such plans may or may not be in line with orders that might come from Yeltsin or some other president of a republic.

Red Army: Always A Force To Consider

Suffice it to say, whatever the course of events in the former USSR, no major moves will be made without at least the acquiescence of the Red Army. This means that the United States should pursue policies that, to the extent possible, make the transition from a totalitarian state to a democratic, free economic state acceptable to that powerful institution. This will not be easy, since it involves the loss of power and prestige for that very institution.

Today there exists a splendid opportunity to influence the attitudes and actions of the military elites in the former Soviet Union. Yeltsin and several of his top military officers have expressed interest in U.S. cooperation in the fielding of a global defense against ballistic missiles. Former communist states of Eastern Europe and several of the new republics of the former USSR have expressed a desire to be part of NATO. These urges provide an opportunity to include the former Soviet military in a

Sharing the Umbrella with Ivan

by Lieutenant General Daniel O. Graham



AN/MPQ-53 missile guidance and control radar group for a "Patriot" air defense missile unit, deployed at an air base in Saudi Arabia. Photo: DoD

limited defense agreement that would go far toward military collaboration with the new governments of the old Soviet empire.

The United States, NATO Europe and even Japan face a common growing threat from limited but nonetheless devastating ballistic missile attacks. The Bush administration's scaled-down version of the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) — GPALS (Global Protection Against Limited Strikes) — is in large part a response to the proliferation of ballistic missiles and weapons of mass destruction, as well as to the uncertainties of maintaining control over such weaponry in the turbulent former Soviet Union.

Missile proliferation has triggered strong efforts in several nations, most notably Israel and France, to acquire ground-based antiballistic missile systems. Russia has the world's only operational strategic defense missile system, a ground-based nuclear system deployed to protect Moscow and much of the surrounding area. The Soviets had also perfected some impressive "tactical" antimissile systems believed by U.S. intelligence agencies to be effective against strategic missiles as well. All these ground-based systems, including our

Patriot system (effective only against the most primitive missiles such as the Scud), would be sharply improved in effectiveness if they could receive warning and tracking data from the deployed space-borne elements of the GPALS program.

Opportunity Knocks

In this situation lies our splendid opportunity. NATO could assume the role of coordinator of a ground-based antimissile defense for Western Europe, Eastern Europe, the former USSR and even for Japan with the space-based sensors of the U.S. GPALS program.

The considerable deployed Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) capabilities of Russia and its significant technological expertise could be brought to bear in such an arrangement. The same would be true with respect to NATO's extensive experience in organizing and managing the NATO-wide extended air defense systems they now have over Western Europe, along with the command, communications and warning systems. The latter could be augmented by U.S., former Soviet and possibly other nations' space assets that each country might make available to the

collective missile defense effort.

As is the case for NATO air defense units, the forces would be developed and allocated to the Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, (SACEUR) on a national basis. There need be no requirement for technological transfers in this arrangement until and unless SACEUR indicates a need for these.

SACEUR's headquarters, Supreme Headquarters Allied Power Europe (SHAPE) would assume requirements planning along with operational control only. Ground-layer units would be national in both types and locations, but tied in with the NATO-managed global warning net, as is the case now for anti-aircraft defenses. Nations not having these could shop for some from those who do — with NATO-wide blessing.

Initially, the United States would provide the space-interceptor layer under SACEUR command. And, those countries able and willing could offer space-based warning capabilities, integrated into NATO's ABM net. This is not a revolutionary new approach, but only an extension in what has taken place for years for the air defense of the NATO areas — merely a widening of the ABM umbrella.

Serving A Mutuality Of Interest

Would the Russians agree to such a limited partnership arrangement? Almost certainly yes, and the same is true of the other new republics and the governments of eastern European nations. Yeltsin and several of his top military advisers have requested participation in NATO. Further, Russian military doctrine has always stressed strategic defense, spending more of their resources on such defenses over the years than on strategic offensive systems. The total manpower involved in the Soviet strategic defense force — anti-air, antimissile and civil defense — was greater than that of the entire U.S. Army's.

Bringing elements of the former Soviet armed forces into planning and participation with NATO would provide the stability inherent in collective defense arrangements. It would give the Red Army leaders a real mission, a job to do, and a future role in their defense, but on a hemisphere-wide rather than Warsaw Pact-wide basis. This alone would go a long way toward reducing the possibility of misuse of the missiles and warheads now dispersed throughout the former Soviet territories and forces.

Lieutenant General Daniel O. Graham, U.S. Army (Ret.) has served as director of the DIA and deputy director of the CIA. In 1981 he founded High Frontier, which gave rise to SDI. ☒

WORLD'S MOST DANGEROUS SHELL GAME

Clearing Deadly Debris in Kuwaiti Desert

by Gary Smith and Alan Maki

Photos by Gary Smith

It was 13 August 1991, just a year since Saddam's armor rolled across the border into Kuwait. The heat was approaching 130 degrees Fahrenheit on the flat, sweltering sand plains of Kuwait. Sweat ran in rivulets down our backs as we chafed under Second Chance-brand vests and Kevlar helmets. We toiled carefully, deliberately, as we went about our work in the knowledge that one lapse of judgment, one fumble, could cost us our lives.

Bruce Tincknell was in command of our clearing a breach for a road through some 600 meters of Iraqi minefield. I was working with Keith Jones, Matt Thompson, Ray Tobin and George Kramer. After first pulling some antitank mines with a long line to check for booby traps, Bruce had us picking them up, then removing the pressure plate

assemblies and detonators, and placing the parts in rows on the ground. As Bruce picked up a Soviet antipersonnel mine, I got nervous and walked away. My gut told me something was not right.

Look Out, Murphy's Here

The other four men were bunched up around Bruce as he started to remove the detonator. Before he got it out, the mine blew. Bruce fell forward screaming. George was spun around by the blast and fell to the sand. The other three were knocked back but kept their footing.

I jumped in the Nissan Patrol vehicle that contained our medical equipment,

TOW antitank missiles, burned-out vehicles, in 7-acre site of ammo dump explosion. Orange marker spray means blow in place — do not move.





started it and backed up, stopping just short of the minefield. Grabbing a handful of gauze bandages, I ran to Bruce. His eyes were blinded by his own blood and his hands were in tatters. The skin was gone from every finger: The remaining meaty flesh hung in ribbons.

Matt, who suffered shrapnel wounds on his face and neck, ignored his own pain and helped me wrap what was left of Bruce's hands. Keith, with superficial wounds, and Ray, who unbelievably was unscathed, went to George's aid. George had taken lots of shrapnel in his face, neck, stomach, arms and legs.

After applying bandages, we loaded Bruce in the front passenger seat and George in the back of the Nissan; then I climbed behind the wheel while several other guys got in back. We started the 60-mile journey to Ad Dawhah, Qatar, where the U.S. Army's Black Horse medevac unit was located.

Keith, driving the lead vehicle, guided



A small shot of M-42 submunitions, spray painted as found, then stacked for demolition.

us away from the minefield and onto a safe dirt road. We were pushing 60 mph until we turned

on the paved road to Ad Dawhah, where our speed approached 100 mph.

We safely reached the hospital, where Keith and Matt were treated and released. As Bruce's injuries were very serious, he was transferred to a Kuwaiti hospital for two days of treatments. When his condition stabilized he was flown to a hospital in Virginia. George's wounds were treated and bandaged; after two days he was able to finish recuperating at our Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) villa in Bayan, a suburb of Kuwait City about a half-mile from the Emir's palace.



The next day, the rest of us were back at work in the minefields and beneath the power lines. More dangerous ordnance was still in need of disposal by whoever had the courage to do the job.

During the next three weeks, five men quit and went home. The danger was too much for them to bear for just \$1,300 weekly pay. At this writing, dozens of EOD technicians from the United States, England and France have been killed cleaning up the war's aftermath in the Gulf. But we FOGs (Foolish Old Guys) remained, and three more old-timers joined us. Dave Johnson, age 47, Dick Posey, 48, and Ike McKeithan, 52. They were all retired from the Army, and we eagerly enlisted them into our 45-and-older set — we had a lot of work to do, and old hands are steady hands.

Ordnance Odyssey Begins

On 20 July 1991, I went to the Missoula County International Airport in Montana on the first leg of my tour to Kuwait. As a former Navy SEAL and EOD technician with five tours in Vietnam, I had been hired by the Environmental Chemical Corp. of Burlingame, California, to clear breaches through minefields and remove U.S., Iraqi and Coalition ordnance from beneath high-power lines in the desert west of Kuwait City.

Every type of ordnance, numbering in the multimillions, remained as the flotsam and jetsam of war, left behind after operations Desert Shield/Storm. Scattered everywhere — in abandoned or bombed-out bunkers, at ammunition supply points, or just scattered across the desert — were bombs and bomblets, artillery and tank rounds, antitank and antipersonnel mines, and hand grenades — just to name some of the most dangerous materials.

Many of the bomblets, hidden by blowing sand, had killed or seriously

injured bedouins, children, camels and sheep. Occasionally, children had picked up submunitions, which detonated in their hands. Passengers in vehicles were periodically being blown to bits. My job was to help prevent more deaths in specific areas of the desert.

I hugged and kissed my wife Nancy good-bye and boarded a Continental Airlines flight, knowing I would not see her for the next three or four months. I didn't realize at the time that I was getting involved in the most dangerous mission in EOD history — there was a fair chance I would never see my wife again.

As the plane lifted off, I gazed out my window at the majestic mountains that surround my home. I gave more attention than usual to the sight, "photographing" the mountains in my mind.

Getting Down To Work

Six days later, I was standing on the flattest terrain I had ever seen — the desert west of Kuwait City. In every direction were high-tension power lines and sand. With the temperature at 120 F and climbing, heat waves radiated from the desert surface. Beneath and on top of that surface lay things even hotter, in the form of live bomblets and other submunitions.



EOD technicians T. J. Roberts (left) and Keith Jones at epicenter of disaster area at Ad Dawhah.

Crew from Environmental Chemical Corp., contracted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to clean up explosive ordnance after disastrous explosion at Coalition ammo dump, Ad Dawhah, Qatar. Not everyone in this picture returned home in one piece.

My first task, lasting many weeks thereafter, was to clear a 35-meter-wide path beneath high-tension power lines that had been damaged during the Coalition bombings. Afterwards personnel from the Blount Corp. of Virginia, also contracted by the Kuwaiti government,

would run their equipment inside our "safe zone" and repair or replace the power lines. Since lives were at stake — our own as well as others — it was imperative that we deal with every piece of ordnance beneath the power-line work area. That meant moving each part to the outer area or blowing it in place.

I glanced at three co-workers moving cautiously beside me. They all looked sure of themselves, which I attributed to their training and past experience.

The man next to me was Ross Averbeck, who was 47 years old and retired from the Air Force. Since we were the two oldest men among the 13 initially involved, me being age 49, we became the original

FOGs. It took but a very short while for me to realize just how foolish we were.

In 4-wheel-drive vehicles, with two of us in each rig, we moved slowly underneath the power lines. Traveling side by side and slower than a man walks, we stared ahead looking intently for any ordnance protruding out of the sand. At the sight of anything at all we stopped, got out and examined each object visually before determining what to do. If judged "safe to move," one of us picked up the particular object and placed it outside the sweep area. If deemed "unsafe to move," we set a charge, ran about 150 meters of electrical wire away from the object and blew it in place.

For two weeks, we toiled at this dangerous job. The days seemed to blend into one long marathon event, enduring 130 F heat, strong winds, smoke from burning oil wells and the nerve-wracking intensity of bomb disposal. Each day we had shepherders and children as distant spectators. Sometimes small herds of camels walked by. Closer inquisitors included rats and once even a poisonous sand cobra.

Only One Freebie

On 31 July, we accidentally drove our vehicle over a Mk 118 "Rockeye" bomblet, an antiarmor device with a shaped charge, but luckily the device did not go off. Had it blown, three or four of us would have been killed. That close call should have been enough to send us FOGs back home to the States, but again, the "F" stood for "foolish."

Occasionally we would find dead animals beneath power lines in an area we had yet to sweep. "Thanks, Joe Camel," I thought, "you probably stepped on one with my name on it." Whatever the case, I kept working.

The strongest message came the day I found two Iraqi soldiers lying dead next to their demolished Land-Rover. Several bomblets had exploded and reduced the men to mere skeletons wearing tattered clothing. That was the day we all should have bought plane tickets for home. A few of the younger men had done so earlier, but not Ross or I.

The ante upped considerably on 14 September when we moved to Ad Dawhah, Qatar. A 7-acre stockpile of U.S. ordnance had been burning and blowing out of control since March. The initial blast wounded 55 British soldiers stationed at the British headquarters complex just 100 meters away. The U.S. Army decided to turn the cleanup operation over to us, after three of their EOD technicians had been vaporized on the site by a huge explosion of submunitions. Of the three, nothing but a single boot was found.

This was the first time in history that the Army had ordered their EOD experts off such a project on an active base, considering the operation "too

THE MINEFIELDS OF KUWAITI BUSINESS

For workers and technicians, it was high risk and high wages; for companies, it was high risk and high return that prompted a gold rush of activity to help oil-rich Kuwait clean house and rebuild after Saddam Hussein's savage attack and rapine occupation.

Virtually every aspect of the Kuwait infrastructure needed rebuilding. Before this could take place, there were hundreds of oil-well fires to be extinguished, and millions upon millions of explosive devices to be located and made safe. Virtually all the expertise had to be imported — extinguishing wellhead fires and deactivating unexploded military ordnance is not a job for enthusiastic amateurs.

And no matter how good you may be at your job, or how successful your business in the West, doing business — even *getting* business — in the Middle East is a rough game for the *novillero*.

For instance, business negotiations there, by Western standards, are not "businesslike." And they seldom proceed with urgency, even in an urgent situation. Whereas Westerners would probably schedule one tidy meeting at which firm decisions and deals would be made and from which all parties would depart to begin expediting the agreed project, setting up a single contract with Middle East oil families might require a half-dozen meetings in a half-dozen European and North African cities — and still not result in a firm deal and/or agreed-upon course of action.

And then there's Muhhamed Al Murphy. John Donovan, *SOF's* Con-

tributing Editor for explosives and demolitions, also operator of a profitable demo business in the Midwest, was part of a consortium negotiating for contracts to extinguish wellhead fires. Meetings were held with the Emirate's representatives in several European and North African cities, and an apparent deal struck. But, the consortium's emissary died of a heart attack flying into Kuwait to sign the final papers and the contract went elsewhere.

Patience and persistence may ultimately pay off for the entrepreneur who wants to do business in Kuwait — there are billions worth of contracts going to North American and European firms — but be sure to take along enough patience to tide you through whatever time it takes to gain an understanding of how they do business, unless you have in your consortium some people well seasoned in the arena of Middle Eastern commerce.

And if considering going as a technician, be sure you are signed on with a financially responsible company, so you will indeed get the wages you were promised. And lastly, be sure the wages you are promised are worth the risk. At this writing, some 85 EOD technicians from England, France, North America, India and Egypt have been killed cleaning up explosive ordnance. And more will surely follow. Top pay for EOD men on a one-year contract is around \$90,000.

For those who get killed, that's wages to last a lifetime.

— Don McLean

hazardous" and contracting civilians for the job.

When we arrived at the Ad Dawhah site to study the problem from the outer perimeter, we were overwhelmed and frightened by what we saw. The place looked like it had been hit by an atomic bomb. The 7 acres were densely covered with submunitions, ammunition cans, TOW antitank missiles, armor-piercing projectiles, tanks, hand grenades, small arms munitions, blown vehicles and tons of debris. Billions of dollars worth of the most dangerous ordnance in the world lay in the most dangerous condition conceivable.

Hmmmm ...

After several days studying designs of all ordnance we would find in the disaster area, we donned Kevlar combat helmets, goggles and Second Chance flak jackets, then entered the danger zone. With every munition representing a potentially fatal situation, every move became a calculated risk. We had to eyeball each explosive, then decide how sensitive it was and how to transport it. Sometimes that meant picking the piece up by hand, which

reduced everything to "one mistake and you're out." If we judged an item not safe to move, we marked it with fluorescent paint and sprayed a circle around it. That circle meant "do not touch — blow in place."

Sometimes a particular area, often 2 to 3 feet deep with ordnance, storage cans and debris, brought the FOGs together to discuss tactics. Our usual strategy, which seemed radical but was the safest method we could conceive, involved a volunteer who drove a D-8 bulldozer right through the mess, using the steel blade to clear and pile up the ordnance.

As one of three volunteer drivers, I hunkered down as low as possible in the 'dozer seat, wearing my armor and earplugs, using the blade as my shield. As I plowed into ordnance, it either moved or blew up against the blade. Oftentimes 25mm projectiles and .50-caliber machine gun cartridges exploded in front of me, making my heart pound and my body sweat. Occasionally, M-42 submunitions and 40mm high explosive (HE) detonated beneath the tracks of the 'dozer.

Continued on page 73



HEAVY FLAK

Women In Combat

Photos courtesy DoD

We received so many letters in response to Sergeant Charles Sasser's "Women in Combat?" (March '92) that we decided to print a column devoted entirely to this concern. Incidentally, our mail ran 10-to-1 against the views Sasser expressed in his article.

Editor:

In reference to Charles Sasser's article "Women in Combat?" (I won't embarrass other NCOs by addressing him as sergeant) I believe we should

look at his article for what it really is. Not problems with women in combat, but rather Sasser's lack of professionalism and leadership. I guess a guy that has been in five (?) wars, ran firefights with guerrillas in Central America and wrote over 2,500

magazine articles just never had time to learn some good old leadership skills.

First, I challenge him to provide written proof that will document all the percentages and numbers he quoted as facts: PT injuries, homosexuality, training injuries,

etc. I've had women soldiers serve in my Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) detachment, trained women from all four services, and had one or two as commanders or officers-in-charge. One of the finest officers I ever served was female.

Women in the EOD program have done just fine. They have faced dangers of terrorist bombs, unexploded ordnance, and met everyday standards of soldiering. In relation to their male counterparts, female EOD techs have also been hurt or burned performing their dangerous tasks, and one was added to the EOD Memorial after she lost her life in the line of duty. Women facing the dangers of EOD are not different than women facing possible combat.

The facts are, Sasser made every effort to show the problems his women soldiers (supposedly) caused, but he *never* indicated what action he took about it. If I ever had any of my soldiers conduct themselves as he described, Article 15s would have been their easiest punishment. If any of my NCOs ever talked like he described or conducted themselves in such a manner, I would have had them relieved. It appears Sasser's NCOs were no better leaders than he was, but then, you lead by example.

Our Army needs leaders and problem solvers, not problem makers. If Sasser wasn't able to handle his unit any better than his article reflects, then he should get the hell out.

Master Sgt. Michael E. Weber
Joplin, Missouri

Dear Sgt. Sasser:

There was so much B.S. in your article that it is embarrassing to wear the same uniform you wear. Your article showed nothing more than your lack of professionalism.

First you stated, "It came as no surprise to me ... when females in my company began campaigning to remain home, only days after the outfit activated." Why didn't you simply use the UCMJ [Uniform Code of Military Justice]? They were given lawful orders by yourself and direct orders by the CO to deploy, weren't they?

Second, you said the Army Physical Proficiency Test (APFT) had to be "doctored" for females. The U.S. Army FM 21-20 *Physical Fitness Training* says nothing about doing pushups on the knees. And if you have seen this done, you were wrong as an NCO to allow it to happen.

"The CO and I tried to control it," was your statement as to all the sexual activity among your company. Top, you need to grab your nuts. You should have done

"If Sasser wasn't able to handle his unit any better than his article reflects, then he should get the hell out."

something about it instead of pussyfooting around it.

It sounds like you provoked your problem, the way you handled it, instead of using your rank and preventing it.

Sp. D. C. Moody
Fort Sill, Oklahoma

Editor:

I cannot help but wonder at the irony of Robert K. Brown endorsing several

women candidates to sit on the NRA Board of Directors on page 3, while on page 39 Sergeant Sasser paints women soldiers as whining camp followers who get pregnant at the hint to being exposed to gunfire. Is Mr. Brown nominating camp followers for the NRA board? I think not.

Doug Mohney
Greenbelt, Maryland

Editor:

I checked with the Army recruiter and two recently retired Army sergeants on the female APFT, and women in the Army don't do their pushups on their knees. I attended the 7th Army NCO Academy at Bad Toelz, Germany, in 1983 and the women didn't do pushups on their knees then, either. Since at least 1984, pushups have been the same for everyone.

There are a lot of problems with the way women have been integrated into our military. An easily checked error such as this tends to discredit any complaints about women in the military and makes correcting the problems that much harder.

Alan Cranford
Phoenix, Arizona

Editor:

I believe Sgt. Sasser has misinformed the readers of *SOF* ... I believe the issue of allowing women in combat is not so much

Continued on page 75



BEACHED SEALS



State-of-the-Art MiniSub Torpedoed by Navy Bureaucracy

by Richard Marcinko and John Weisman
Photos courtesy John Weisman

THE SEALs — the U.S. Navy's SpecWar elite. The tough, capable warfighters who get the best training, along with the mission-specific, leading-edge hardware of their choice ... most of the time. Unless they tread upon someone else's saltwater turf, or disrupt feudalistic U.S. Navy baronies.

Just such a needed-but-denied tool is the Italian-made 3gst9 minisub. A submarine well suited for clandestine infiltration and extraction of small special operations units in shallow waters — something the Navy currently cannot easily do.

The 3gst9 can be used for covert reconnaissance, or snatch operations, inside such high-risk sites as hostile harbors. It can be used to lay (or remove) mines in coastal waterways, harbors or rivers. The 3gst9 is transportable on a C141 Starlifter or C5A Galaxy, allowing it to be deployed with SEAL Team Six in counterterror

operations, or with other SEAL units in a SpecWar role. It has, reportedly, already proven itself in use by the *Incursari*, Italy's top-secret combat swimmer unit based near the Ligurian town of La Spezia.

According to sources close to U.S. and West European intelligence communities, Saddam Hussein had on order four Italian minisubs — only the outbreak of the Gulf War prevented him from receiving them. Had he been able to deploy some of his estimated 2,000 combat swimmer commandos based at Umm Quasr in these minisubs, the coastal oil facilities in Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates would have been in jeopardy. Military sources confirm that none of the Coalition had adequate minisub countermeasures available in the Gulf arena to thwart concentrated, sub-launched Iraqi SEAL-type attacks.

Others who would like to get their hands

on the 3gst9 include such nice guys as Syrian dictator Hafez Assad and Libyan strong man Muammar Khadafi. According to a U.S. source familiar with worldwide minisub purchases, there are a number of Third World nations, including Pakistan, currently trying to assemble a tactical, man-portable atomic arsenal that would like to own an efficient, clandestine underwater delivery system.

Some of these countries now own highly detectable conventional subs, mostly medium or long-range boats, the bulk of which are Soviet post-World War II Romeo-, Juliet- and Foxtrot-class subs, German 209s or British Oberons, all of which employ technology more than a half-century old. But new minisubs are replacing these obsolete diesels.

Yugoslavia's Una-class pocket submarine was introduced in the early 1980s. North Korea, now making its own min-

isubs, bought German manufactured Bruker Seahorses. Even the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) has a pair of minisubs — Cosmos SX 404s, originally bought by Libya and turned over to the PLO in the early 1980s.

In fact, by the end of this decade scores of these pocket-size, versatile undetectable craft will be in the hands of dozens of countries. Unless something is done, the United States will not be among them.

Yet deployment of the 3gst9 could revolutionize Navy SEAL operations. Costing only \$14 million each, this 9.65-meter (31.5-foot), 22-metric-ton submarine is made by the firm of Maritalia, based in Fiumicino, Italy. The 3gst9 can hold as many as nine SEAL operators and crew; its underwater range is some 400 miles, and it can dive as deep as 620 meters — more than 2,000 feet. It has a fuel-efficient, compact, closed-cycle diesel (C³D) engine that, coupled to the sub's 20-horsepower brushless DC motor, makes the craft silent and essentially undetectable.

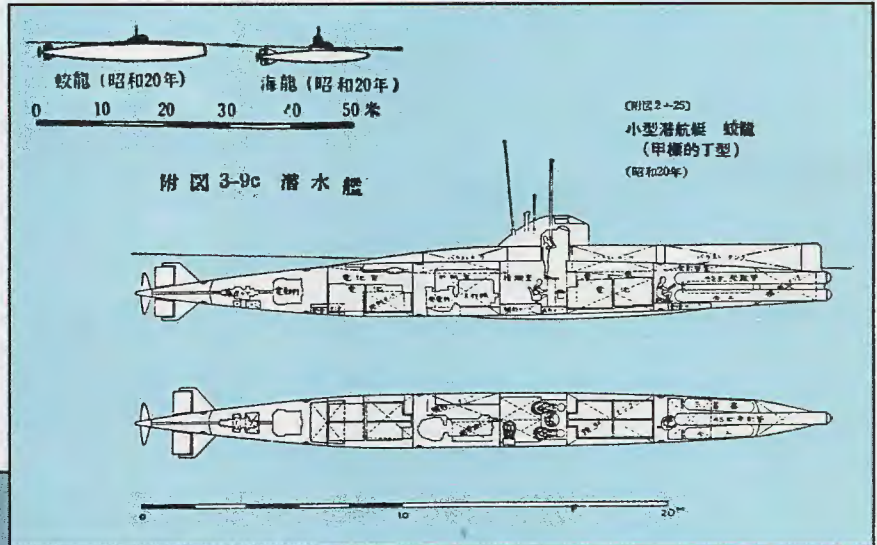
Facing page: Toroidal hull of the 3gst9 partially complete and primed.

But what makes the 3gst9 truly revolutionary is its radical toroidal hull design — it looks like a pile of doughnuts welded together — providing up to 50% more interior space than a conventional hull. Also, its unique diesel “rebreathing” system makes this minisub almost impossible to detect.

The concept of the 3gst9 is simple. Instead of utilizing large oxygen tanks, the hull of the sub itself becomes the oxygen storage area. A skeleton of 3-inch gas

storage toroids made of conventional pipe material is welded together to form what looks like the pile of doughnuts. In some of these doughnuts is stored oxygen for breathing. In others, oxygen for powering

Schematic of 26.25-meter, 59.3-ton Japanese Koryu-class midget sub. Inset is comparison of Koryu-class (left) and “two-man” sub (right). Except for size, both were “conventional” dry submarines. Drawing: courtesy Vortex Archives



MINISUBS IN AMERICA

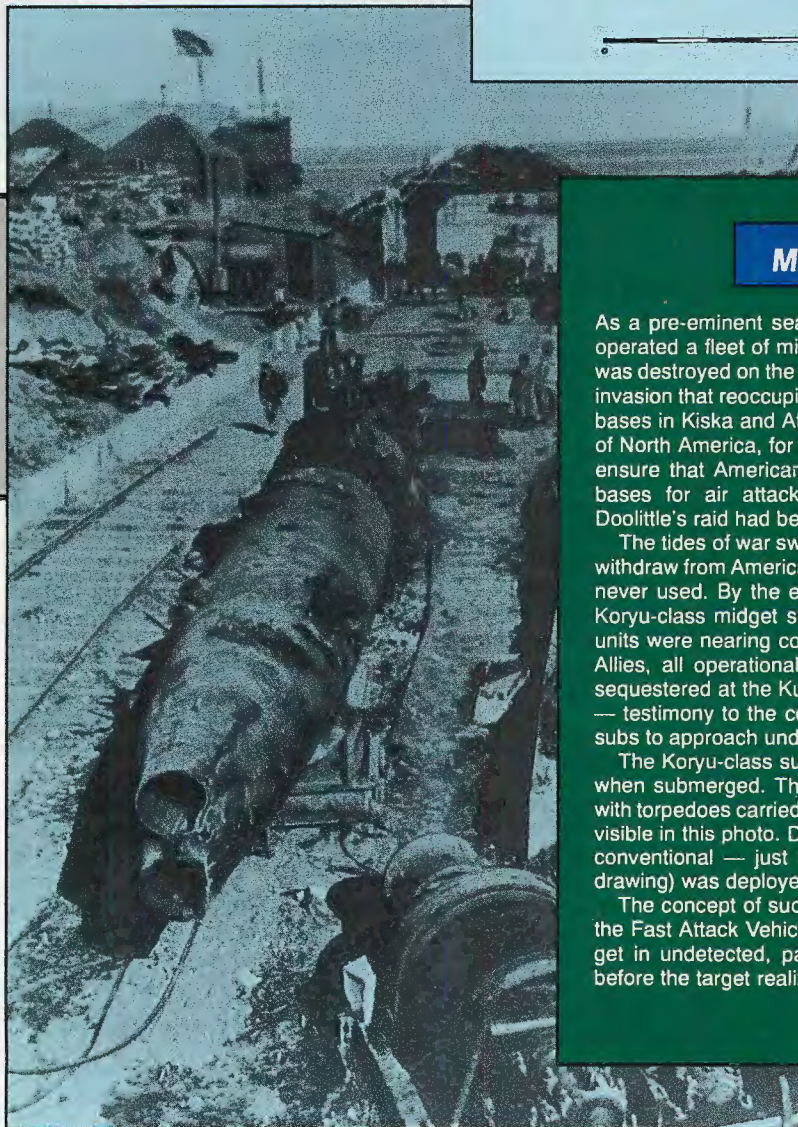
As a pre-eminent sea power 50 years ago, the Imperial Japanese Navy operated a fleet of midget Koryu-class submarines. The one pictured here was destroyed on the Alaskan island of Kiska by Allied bombing, prior to the invasion that reoccupied this U.S. island. The Japanese had planned to use bases in Kiska and Attu, Alaska, as a springboard for a proposed invasion of North America, for harassing Allied shipping in the North Pacific, and to ensure that American islands in the North Pacific would not be used as bases for air attacks against the Japanese homeland (they thought Doolittle's raid had been launched from the Aleutians).

The tides of war swung so quickly against the Japanese that they had to withdraw from American territory in Alaska; these midget subs at Kiska were never used. By the end of the war, the Japanese had commissioned 14 Koryu-class midget subs at the Maizuru Naval Shipyard, and another 50 units were nearing completion there when the war ended. By order of the Allies, all operational or floatable Koryu-class subs were gathered and sequestered at the Kure submarine base before the Allies landed in Japan — testimony to the concern the Allies felt over the ability of these midget subs to approach undetected and wreak havoc.

The Koryu-class subs were 26.25 meters long, and displaced 59.3 tons when submerged. They had a four-man crew (drawing) and were armed with torpedoes carried in the forward hold. The two torpedo tubes are clearly visible in this photo. Design and construction of the Koryu-class subs were conventional — just very small. An even smaller two-man sub (inset to drawing) was deployed by the Japanese before the war's end.

The concept of such small submarines is very much like the concept of the Fast Attack Vehicle (FAV) — although lightly (if at all) armed, they can get in undetected, participate in some audacious activity and get away before the target realizes it has been compromised or hit.

— Don McLean





the C³D engine. As the oxygen is used up, it is replaced in the pipes with carbon dioxide and engine exhaust gases, so that no telltale trail of bubbles ever escapes the sub's hull.

Lessons from the Persian Gulf, Lebanon, Grenada and Panama should have taught the Navy that warfare requirements for the '90s and beyond must include small, rapidly deployable forces for limited yet crucial shallow-water missions. Expansion of the Navy's SpecWar budget over the past five years is evidence that some within the system appreciate these new demands.

But, unless Congress orders the Navy to buy the 3gst9, the SEALs won't ever get to use it — although the bad guys may well employ it against us.

The Navy establishment has turned the sub down. It was not rejected as lacking — the 3gst9 was reviewed favorably by a Navy team in 1988; it also received high marks from General James Lindsay, the former commander of Special Operations Command (SOC). Congress even appropriated \$15 million so that the Navy could test the 3gst9 system. But the sub has been rejected — a casualty of a half-century-old feud between naval factions that has the system cutting off its nose to spite its face.

Some explanation is in order. The Navy is made up of three seagoing baronies: surface force (ships), submarine force and air force (planes and aircraft carriers). This

Diver deployed from 3gst9, attaching limpet mine to target.

triad was designed to fight wars together. It also makes the Navy the one "stand alone" service branch. The Navy has its own army — they are called Marines; its own transport — ships and amphibious vessels, and its own air force — naval air. The Navy's philosophy has historically been that this seagoing triad can fight wars by itself. In peacetime, however, each barony competes with the other two for the biggest slice of Congressional-budget naval appropriations. In this case, the dispute is between surface force, which funds and controls SEALs, and submarine force, which funds and controls dry submarines.

A Sub By Any Other Name

The feud stems from the rigid policies designed and implemented by the late Vice Admiral Hyman G. Rickover. As the much ballyhooed and self-proclaimed "Father of the Nuclear Navy," Rickover did his best to purge "his" beloved submarine force of any subs that were not nuclear.

Rickover's anti-diesel tradition continues today, much to the 3gst9's bad fortune. It may incorporate state-of-the-art technology, but to submarine force it is just another diesel. It may have extremely low passive and active acoustic signatures

making it difficult to find, but it is not nuclear powered. In fact, no matter how well any minisub may perform, the benchmarks on which it will be judged are that it is dry — i.e., self-contained — and that it is diesel, not nuclear powered.

Surface forces may not buy any dry subs for SEALs. Its purchasing powers are restricted to acquiring the more limited and restricting Swimmer Delivery Vehicles (SDVs).

SDVs operate from surface ships, shore locations or specially designed SDV shelters that can be adapted to the hulls of nuclear submarines. They are small, maneuverable, submersible craft that can carry anywhere from one to six SEALs. The combination of launch platforms affords flexibility in operational planning and also enables SEALs to perform their precarious missions without being restricted to detectable patterns.

Flexibility is grudgingly permitted by sub force because the present generation of SDVs are all "wet" boats — the SEALs who ride them must wear their own underwater breathing apparatus, such as Draeger's bubbleless recirculating system or mixed-gas scuba gear — thus, SDVs are not considered "real" submarine assets.

SEALs Should Be Self-Contained

But the SDV has limited range and diving capacities. These shortcomings restrict launch depth from the "mother

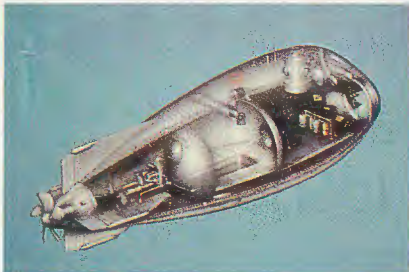
platform” and thereby can, at times, make the nuclear submarine vulnerable to enemy detection and/or attack if SEALs must be infiltrated close to shore. Additionally, once the SEALs have accomplished their nasty deeds, the recovery operation becomes even more precarious, as the mother-ship sub becomes a sitting duck in shallow water, especially after a mission has been completed and the enemy knows he’s been had.

If the Navy were mission-oriented, instead of turf-protective, the obvious thing to do would be to provide SEALs with a small, cheap, maneuverable transportable craft that operates efficiently in shallow water and doesn’t risk the billions invested in a nuclear sub. But this simple, straightforward step is not happening for two reasons.

First, the SEAL community has virtually no political clout in Washington these days, so no one will whack the Navy into line and force it to do the right thing. More fundamental is this: If one incorporates the advantages of a submarine like the 3gst9 into SpecWar operations, one invades the hallowed ground of dry boats and therefore the turf of (as they like to call themselves) “the real submariners.”

That would create substantial systemic problems for sub force. Because, if the minisub were accepted as an operational asset, then sub force would have to redevelop the two-tier career track program it discarded under Rickover, when there was one track for the vice admiral’s elite nuclear sailors and another for everyone else.

The barons at sub force also realize that if they ever acknowledge a non-nuclear sub could perform well in SpecWar operations they might then be asked why



Cutaway schematic of 3gst9 shows efficient utilization of space, made possible by stowage of gases in toroidal hull.



Cockpit of 3gst9, showing spacious accommodations, sophisticated instruments.



Diver in bubbleless rebreathing apparatus deploys from minisub with limpet mine.

could not cheaper, smaller boats also be of some tactical advantage elsewhere in our defense strategy.

Diesels are, in fact, more suited than nuclear subs for defensive antisubmarine warfare roles in the shallower depths of our coastal waters, as well as other tactical applications such as surveillance in entrances to foreign ports, operations in narrow, shallow waters such as the Persian Gulf, or operations in what the Pentagon calls Contingency And Limited-Objectives Warfare (CALOW) regions.

How could diesel minisubs such as the 3gst9 be used? Since the 1970s, submarines have been an integral part of the Navy’s SpecWar operational plans. Starting in the ’70s, submarines were modified for use by SEALs for the clandestine infiltration and extraction of operators, and as launch platforms for SDVs. The scenario that follows indicates how a 3gst9 could have made a dangerous real-life mission much simpler to accomplish.

According to published Soviet military intelligence reports, Navy divers thought to be SEALs have, for years, used small, clandestine submersible vehicles the Soviets believe to be SDVs, in planting eavesdropping devices near military and military-industrial facilities as well as on communications lines.

One such op, cited in *The International Dictionary of Intelligence*, was called “Operation Ivy Bells.” According to the “dictionary,” Ivy Bells is the “nickname for a joint National Security Agency/USN operation that serviced induction ‘taps’ on Soviet underwater cables on a periodic basis.”

In the 1990 USSR Ministry of Defense publication *Openness and Espionage*,

Soviet Lieutenant General Nikolai Brusnitsin, chairman of the Technical Commission of the former USSR, described the United States’ clandestine eavesdropping methodology:

“The device is a steel pipe more than 5 meters long and about 120cm across, marked ‘Property of the United States of America.’ The hermetically sealed pipe contains several tons of electronic equipment to amplify the reception and demodulate signals picked up from the cable. Conversations are monitored by 60 tape recorders which operate when the line is busy and stop when the line is dead, being switched on automatically when conversations are resumed. Each tape recorder is intended for 150-hour operation, so the total volume of tapped conversations adds up to about 3,000 hours. By the time the device runs out of tape, a scuba diver finds it with the help of a sono-buoy installed on the container, removes the induction-sensor grip and the antenna preamplifier, and pulls the device into a specially equipped submarine.”

Tactical Nightmare

Judging from this Soviet account, the operation must have been a technical and tactical nightmare, involving a number of life-threatening steps. First, a nuclear sub had to be maneuvered to the proximity of the monitoring device. Then, an SDV attached to the sub’s hull was launched. While the sub waited, vulnerable to Soviet hydrophones and both passive and active sensors, the SDV and its contingent of SEALs made their way to the target without arousing suspicion.

Once there, they removed the device and towed it back to the submarine, where the tapes were replaced and routine maintenance was performed. Then they took the SDV on another round trip to replace the monitor, returned to their sub and hauled ass.

It’s the sort of mission that gives a sub captain gray hair, because it leaves him, his ship and its crew vulnerable for hours at a stretch. Nuclear subs cannot, like diesels, “bottom.” Like sharks, they have to keep moving. They can “hover” above the bottom, but hovering is an intensely complicated maneuver to perform, especially if a sub has to hover for four, five or six hours at a time.

Use The Right Tool

The 3gst9 would make such clandestine insertions much simpler, because it could leave a mother ship or submarine 100 or so miles away, carry the SEALs to their target, serve as a submerged work ship to effect the necessary work on the monitors, and then withdraw quietly.

But conventionally powered minisubs would mean smaller sub-force budgets and less clout for the naval nuclear technocrats who currently control how Congressional

Continued on page 70



BLOOP TUBE

M79 — No Death Ray,
But Don't Sell It Short

Text & Photos by Peter G. Kokalis



Prior to settlement of the war in Namibia, a terrorist, surprised by a team of 101st Battalion Casspir armored fighting vehicles, popped out of the bush and started racing down a track at full speed. Lead poured out of every Browning machine gun and Hispano-Suiza 20mm automatic cannon in the team, to no avail. The terr just kept bounding down the trail. Finally a troopie shoved his M79 grenade launcher out the open top of the vehicle and fired a round. The terr was carrying an antitank mine in his rucksack. They found only his shoes and feet.

Lucky shot? You bet. I've had 40mm HE rounds explode within 20 meters of me in El Salvador and walked away completely unscathed by a single fragment. It's no death ray, but don't sell the M79 and its munitions short. After 30 years, they still comprise a versatile and effective weapons system.

During the Vietnam War, the M79 probably went by as many names as there were units to whom it was issued. In the 9th Cav, it was referred to as the "elephant gun." It was also called "chunker," "thump gun," "'79," "blooker," "bloop" and the "bloop tube." The latter three names were derived from the distinctive sound generated when a round popped out of its muzzle. The M79 grenade launcher was a popular and much beloved Vietnam era weapon — for good reasons. It can still be encountered blooping HE downrange from Burma to El Salvador, with stops in between at several watering holes in Africa.

Respectably accurate out to 200 meters in the hands of a skilled operator trained in precise range estimation, the M79's maximum effective range on area targets is about 350 meters (150 meters on point targets). This bridges the gap between hand grenades (maximum effective-throwing range of 30-40 meters) and the 60mm mortar (with a minimum range of 300 to 400 meters). However, like a shotgun, each M79 is a creature unto itself; careful zeroing by an operator assigned to a specific M79 is required to maximize the accuracy potential of the weapon and the rainbow trajectory of its slow-moving projectile.

Development of the M79 and its 40x46mmSR (Semi-Rimmed) munitions began in the early 1950s under the U.S. Army Ordnance Department, headed at that time by the infamous Colonel Rene R. Studler. It was this very same Studler who jammed the 7.62x51mm cartridge down NATO's throat and foisted the M14 rifle on the U.S. armed forces. His deputy, Jack Bird, created a crude, spring-loaded launcher with which he proceeded to fire golf balls in the center courtyard of the Pentagon. Since the golf ball's trajectory was reminiscent of that produced by a No. 9 golf club (the so-called "niblick"), Bird suggested the project be called "Niblick," and that indeed became its code name.

An unusual high-low pressure system was employed to launch the new warhead developed for this project at the U.S. Army's Ballistic Research Laboratories (BRL) at Aberdeen Proving Ground. The launching method itself had been devel-

oped in Germany during World War II. An aluminum cartridge case with a brass powder-charge cup in front of the percussion primer is used to hold about five grains of M-9 flake-type mortar propellant (an enhanced, fast-burning Bull's-eye-type powder). The propellant/high-pressure chamber has six sealed holes around its circumference. When the launcher's firing pin strikes the primer, the resulting primer flash ignites the powder within the high-pressure chamber.

The burning propellant creates a pressure of close to 35,000 pounds per square inch (psi) within the chamber, forcing the gases to rupture the vent holes and bleed into the larger (low pressure) chamber of the cartridge case itself. When the gases enter the larger chamber, the pressure drops to no more than 3,000 psi, which is sufficient to propel the grenade through the launcher's barrel and to the target, and yet generate a low enough recoil impulse to permit firing from a shoulder-mounted weapon. The projectile's muzzle velocity is only 250 fps; rounds can easily be seen sailing downrange. The launcher's rifling imparts a spin of about 3,700 rpm on the grenade to provide the required accuracy and to arm the impact-type fuze.

By 1953, Springfield Armory was launching these grenades from three types of launchers: a crude, shoulder-mounted, single-shot weapon; a single-shot handgun and a shoulder-mounted launcher with an harmonica-type, three-shot magazine (some of these latter devices mysteriously showed up in Vietnam a decade later).

Initially, the U.S. Army Infantry Board was predisposed toward the harmonica gun. However, in further tests it proved to be awkward and less accurate than the single-shot types. In 1955 Lieutenant Colonel Roy E. Rayle, the small arms R&D chief at Springfield Armory, proposed a single-shot launcher patterned after the Stevens single-barrel, break-open shotgun. When demonstrated as the XM79, the response was overwhelmingly favorable and it was recommended for

type classification in 1956. A year later, it was adopted as the M79 — just six years from concept to standardization. The first M79s were issued to U.S. Army personnel in 1961.

Before production was terminated a decade later, in 1971 — in favor of the M203 — 350,000 M79s had been produced by Springfield Armory (pilot-line production only), Kanarr Corp. (the primary contractor), Action Manufacturing Corp., TRW Inc., Varo Inc., and Exotic Metals Corp. Subsequently, a small lot was produced by Grenadier Industries in the early 1980s. At the present time, Amtech International (Dept. SOF, Suite 104-730, 870 S. Mason Road, Katy, TX 77450; phone: 713-492-7857) has recently commenced limited production of the M79. We received a specimen from them for test and evaluation.

Amtech's M79 meets milspec require-

ments in every regard, and in one area at least far exceeds them. The M79's distinctive hump-backed buttstock was supplied in either Fiberglass or walnut form. SOF's test specimen was provided with a heavily burled American Walnut buttstock looking like it belonged on a custom-made African express rifle. Most M79 walnut buttstocks are equipped with effective brown rubber recoil pads (originally Pachmayr and subsequently "NOSHOC") and black synthetic spacers. The Fiberglass stocks were fitted with generic black rubber recoil pads. All the M79s I have ever examined were fitted with walnut fore ends.

Equipped with a 14-inch aluminum-alloy barrel (finished with the extremely tough Martin hard-coat anodizing process developed in the late 1950s — 80 Rockwell hardness on the surface), the M79's overall length is 28.78 inches. The bore has six grooves, with a rifling length of 11.83 inches and a very slow right-hand twist of one turn in 48 inches. The weight of the weapon, empty, is only 5.95 pounds.

A so-called "whipit" version of the M79 would occasionally surface in Vietnam. The term is derived from shotguns with both barrel and stock severely



Training cadre of the 2nd ARVN Rangers with a so-called "whipit" version of the M79. While it looks intimidating, chopping firearms that are originally designed for shoulder mounting seriously compromises accuracy, hit probability and range. Photo: courtesy DoD.

Opposite top: After 30 years, the M79 40x46mmSR grenade launcher and the wide range of munitions available for it still comprise a versatile and effective weapons system.

Opposite bottom: XM576 round (left) for the M79/M203 has 20 No. 4 buckshot pellets with a large black plastic sabot. Muzzle velocity is only 885 fps and penetration is inadequate. Commercial subcaliber aluminum insert will accept any 12-gauge shot shell. The shot pattern of both these multiple-projectile systems is unsatisfactory at ranges beyond 10 meters.



Grenadiers of the Salvadoran Army's Airborne Battalion in the deep bush during heavy contact with Marxist guerrillas. Photo: courtesy Salvadoran Airborne Battalion.

chopped for concealment — used especially in the 19th-century “Old West.” The user supposedly would “whip it” into action from his coat, beneath which the gun had been concealed. While it looks intimidating, chopping firearms that are originally designed for shoulder mounting seriously compromises accuracy, hit probability and range; an ill-advised practice.

With the exception of the barrel, all Amtech metal components are fabricated from steel and phosphate finished (“park-erized”). The receiver is a mill-finished drop-forging made from 4140 ordnance steel.

Accessories include an M14/M1 Garand-type web or nylon sling, a plastic muzzle cap, a brass bore brush with a pull-through cord, a plastic oil bottle, canvas accessory case and a combination screwdriver/wrench/brush used for disassembly and cleaning. This combo tool should be used periodically to tighten the firing-pin retainer. Important TMs include the Operator’s Manual (TM 9-1010-205-10) and the organizational-level maintenance manual (TM 9-1010-205-24). Main-

tenance procedures duplicate those for any firearm of this general type. Ammunition is carried in either cotton bandoleers, holding six rounds each, or in a grenadier’s vest pockets.

You’d have to be brain dead to encounter problems operating the M79. Just push the barrel-locking latch to the right, as far as possible. When the barrel swings open, the firing mechanism is cocked and the safety is automatically engaged. Drop a round in the chamber, swing the barrel shut, push the safety (directly in back of the barrel-locking latch) forward to expose the letter “F,” aim and pull the trigger. Trigger pull weights are generally in the neighborhood of about 10 pounds. The trigger guard can be pivoted 90 degrees in either direction by depressing a large spring-loaded detent button to the front. This permits firing with gloves.

The front sight, a tapered blade with protective ears, can be drifted on its dovetail mount at the muzzle to adjust windage zero. The earliest production series M79 front sight was nothing more than the M14 rifle sight turned around.

The excellent, folding-leaf-type rear sight with an open square-notch can be adjusted for windage (Each click moves the strike of the grenade approximately 14cm to the right or left for every 100 meters of range.) or for elevation from 80

to 375 meters in 25-meter increments. The windage knob is to the right. The rear sight can be adjusted for elevation by either loosening the spring-loaded retainer lock nut, then depressing it and manually sliding the rear-sight carrier up or down. Also, elevation can be fine-tuned by turning a knob on top of the sight assembly. Either way, as the rear-sight carrier is moved up the adjustable elevation scale, the open square-notch is cammed to the left, compensating for right-hand drift of the grenade. When the rear sight is folded and locked down, an open square-notch battle sight is exposed for use when firing at ranges less than 100 meters. When firing with a tail wind, you must decrease the range setting. A head wind requires increasing the elevation.

Unfortunately, in a justifiable effort to give a rifle back to the grenadier, the M79 was replaced by the M203 — a less reliable and generally inferior launcher system. But that’s a story for another occasion.

A wide variety of munitions was and still are available for the M79 and other weapons chambered for the 40x46mmSR round. Some of it is useful and some of it is most decidedly not, in my opinion. Obviously the High Explosive (HE) types are of primary importance to those on the battlefield. The early M406 wrapped-wire

grenade contained an explosive filler inside a steel casing that produced fragments with a casualty radius (the area within which 50% of exposed personnel will become casualties) of up to 5 meters. When the grenade detonated, more than 300 fragments were propelled in all directions at 5,000 fps. This initial velocity drops off quickly, as the fragments do not have enough mass or the aerodynamic shape required to sustain high velocities for any significant length of travel. Also, the M406's impact-detonated fuze often proved insensitive when it struck soft mud.

Subsequent to the M406 grenade, a number of other anti-personnel HE 40x46mmSR grenades were fielded.

The M397 (A1) is an airburst type, with a PD (Pyrotechnic Delay detonator) fuze. This peculiar munition is reminiscent of a World War II era "Bouncing Betty" mine. After impact, the grenade is projected approximately 5 feet into the air with detonation 80 milliseconds later. I have never seen one and cannot believe they

Vietnam era combat engineers carried M79 "bloop tubes" (right) to complement team ordnance. Here, men of 173rd Brigade search Dong Nai riverbanks by raft in 1966, seeking hidden enemy underwater bridge. Photo: DoD.



M79 SPECIFICATIONS

Caliber:	40x46mmSR (Semi-Rimmed).
Operation:	Break-open, single-shot, shoulder-mounted.
Weight, empty:	5.95 pounds.
Overall length:	28.78 inches.
Barrel:	Aluminum alloy — Six grooves with a rifling length of 11.83 inches and a right-hand twist of one turn in 48 inches.
Barrel length:	14 inches.
Sights:	Tapered blade-type front sight with protective ears, adjustable for windage zero; folding-leaf-type rear with open square-notch, adjustable for windage and elevation from 80 to 375 meters in 25-meter increments; battle sight for ranges under 100 meters.
Finish:	Barrel: Martin hard-coat anodizing; steel components: phosphate finished ("parkerized").
Furniture:	Walnut fore end. Walnut or Fiberglas buttstock with rubber recoil pad.
Manufacturer:	Amtech International, Dept. SOF, Suite 104—730, 870 S. Mason Road, Katy, TX 77450; phone: 713-492-7857.
Accessories:	Sling, plastic muzzle cap, brass bore brush with pull-through cord, oil bottle, canvas accessory case, combo tool and grenadier's vest.
Status:	Obsolete in U.S. armed forces, but issued to domestic National Guard units. In service throughout the world.
T&E Summary:	Rugged, reliable and lightweight. Accuracy potential commensurate with operator experience. Wide range of munitions.

were ever fielded in quantity.

Impact-detonated grenade types were equipped with either the M552 fuze spin-armed about 3 meters from the muzzle, or the M551 fuze that is both spin- and setback-armed and must travel between 14 and 28 meters before arming.

Currently the most prevalent grenade is an HEDP (High Explosive Dual Purpose) grenade (both M430 and M433) which provides some penetration on light-skinned armor in addition to its antipersonnel effects. It is an effective round, but its performance is surpassed by the combloc VOG-26 30x28mm high-low pressure grenade fired from the shoulder-mounted M26A2, as this Soviet round has a more desirable fragmentation pattern that is lateral in configuration (See "SOF T&Es New Com-Bloc 30mm Launcher and Grenade," Oct. '91).

The manual says that when firing HE grenades at targets within ranges of 50 to 80 meters the operator must be in a protected position. Furthermore, 31 meters is supposed to be the absolute minimum distance at which targets can be engaged with 40x46mmSR HE grenades. That doesn't corre-

late with my personal experience. If the pucker factor is high and they're coming across the wire, you can fire at targets as close as 20 meters — no less safely than anything else likely to happen in that situation.

To provide close-range potential for the M79, a cartridge with approximately 45 fléchettes in a plastic case (the so-called "beehive" round) was issued in Vietnam on an experimental basis. It was soon replaced by the XM576, which has 20 No. 4 buckshot pellets (each 0.24-inch in diameter) that leave the M79's muzzle at only 885 fps (about 450 fps less than the velocity obtained from a 12-gauge shotgun).

The no-longer experimental M576 remains current issue and is manufactured

by Olin. I have seen it in substantial quantity in El Salvador. With a large, black plastic sabot protruding from the case mouth, it looks impressive. Its down-range effectiveness is decidedly less so. A standard 2.75-inch 12-gauge buckshot load holds 27 No. 4 pellets. In recent years, No. 4 buckshot has been almost universally rejected by U.S. law enforcement agencies, as it lacks the required penetration. It will not even penetrate light clothing such as jackets with reliability.

In an effort to further improve the M79's potential with multiple-projectile shot, a 12-gauge subcaliber device was issued in Vietnam, again on an experimental basis. This consisted of a steel rim and liner with a spring-loaded extractor inside a 40mm black plastic bushing. The device was about 9 inches in length and would accept any 12-gauge buckshot load. In recent years, commercial subcaliber inserts have on occasion surfaced for the M79. The one I have was machined on a lathe from aluminum-alloy bar stock and is 5 inches in overall length. It is choked Improved Cylinder and has a cutout on the head to assist in prying out the empty 12-gauge case.

The shot pattern of either the M576 round or of 12-gauge shells fired in these subcaliber inserts is unsatisfactory at ranges beyond 10 meters. Furthermore, you are still armed with nothing more than

Continued on page 67

MOTHER OF ALL BOMBS

15,000-Pound Daisy Cutters Over Iraq

by Dale B. Cooper



The inscription stenciled on the 15,000-pound bomb's casing said it all: "THE MOTHER OF ALL BOMBS FOR THE MOTHER OF ALL WARS, COMPLIMENTS OF 1 SOW."

In Vietnam, bombs like this one were dubbed "daisy cutters," because one of them could create a landing zone in the thickest jungle with a single blast. Dropped from a C-130 Hercules, the 15,000-pound bombs reduced tall trees to toothpicks and gouged out an "Instant LZ." After the dust settled, helicopters could land at a site that would have taken days to hack out by hand.

During the Gulf War, trees were not a problem, but the super bomb was dusted off and used again.

The 1st Special Operations Wing (SOW) based at Hurlburt Field, Florida, used the super bomb to detonate Iraqi land mines sown in southern Kuwait, and also to demoralize thousands of Iraqi troops

The Mother Of All Bombs: The "daisy cutter" of Vietnam-era fame becomes the mine-blasting, mind-blasting PsyOps weapon of the Gulf War.

Photo: courtesy U.S. Air Force

hunkered down in fortifications behind two mine belts.

As G-day (the day the ground war began against Iraq) approached, Lieutenant General Walt Boomer, commander of U.S. Marines in the Persian Gulf, became concerned about casualties his men might sustain trying to breach those mine fields: On Christmas Eve, Boomer advised commanders of his assault battalions they could expect to sustain 30% casualties breaching the minefields.

If Boomer had any hopes of improving the odds for the 1st and 2nd Marine Divisions tasked with breaching the minefields, some of the 500,000 land mines had to be destroyed.

When Boomer expressed his concern to

planners at U.S. Central Command, the commanding officer of 1st SOW, Air Force Colonel George A. Gray III, suggested using BLU-82s, the official designation for the "daisy cutters" of the Vietnam era.

"The Blokes Have Just Nuked Kuwait"

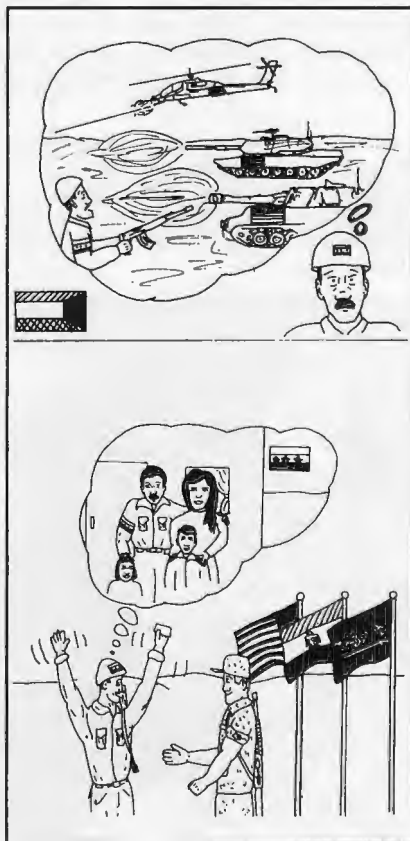
A British commando team was inside Kuwait about 100 miles from where the first BLU-82 was dropped on 7 February 1991. According to Gray, the leader of that team radioed his commanding officer and excitedly described what he thought was a nuclear attack on Iraqi troops: "My God, sir, the blokes have just nuked Kuwait."

"The bomb looks like a small tactical nuke when it goes off," Gray explained. About 80 miles away in Khafji, a town Iraqi forces invaded on 30 January, U.S. Army Special Forces also saw the bomb explode.

"We were standing on the roof of an apartment building in Khafji when suddenly we saw this brilliant flash of light in the distance," said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Richard Balwanz, leader of an SF team inserted deep into Iraq on the eve of the ground war (See "Bulldog Balwanz and His Eight-Man Army," May '92.).

"We not only saw the bomb explode, but also heard the shock wave roaring across the flat desert like a freight train," said Balwanz, who was almost blown off the rooftop by the wave. "What a blast! I can't imagine what it's like to be at ground

1st SOW dropped these leaflets showing Iraqis how to surrender — BLU-82 showed them that they should.



zero when one of those babies goes off.”

Ordnance experts told *Soldier of Fortune* that the heat generated by BLU-82s is incredible, not to mention the overpressure. “This bomb has the ability to turn a body to goo,” one source at the Pentagon noted. “Inside one mile, the blast will cause blood to pour from every orifice in your body.”

The Blues Brothers

Since BLU-82s were dropped in pairs in the Persian Gulf, the super bombs became known as the “Blues Brothers,” in honor of the late actor John Belushi and his comedic sidekick Dan Aykroyd.

A total of 11 Volkswagen-sized BLU-82s were dropped between 7 February and G-day. The formidable bombs were yanked out of a MC-130 Combat Talon by drogue chute. Once clear of the aircraft, the bomb separated from its wooden cradle and fell nose-first at about 300 feet per second: At that rate, it took about one minute for the bomb to fall 17,000 feet to the target.

But there is no evidence that BLU-82s detonated any land mines in southern Kuwait. “We were not able to get in there and do any thorough analysis of the impact points, because all of our forces had moved on and mine clearing operations were underway,” Gray said.

Although it’s not known if BLU-82s were effective against the minefields, the “dumb bombs” proved to be first-class psychological weapons. Before each BLU-82 was dropped, MC-130 Combat Talons and HC-130s saturated the target area with thousands of leaflets advising Iraqi soldiers that at such-and-such a time and date, a powerful weapon, the likes of which they had never seen before, would be dropped.

The Psychological Operations (PsyOps) leaflets advised the Iraqis to save themselves by heading south and surrendering to Coalition forces. This PsyOps side of the “Blues Brothers” operation was apparently successful. Before the first pair of bombs were dropped — one in the southwest quadrant of Kuwait; the other in the southeast quadrant — an Iraqi battalion commander and two members of his staff reached the safety of Coalition lines.

No Will To Fight

According to intelligence reports Gray read, the Iraqis brought with them charts of minefields in their sector of southern Kuwait. Other Enemy Prisoners of War (EPWs) told interrogators the “big bombs” had destroyed their will to fight.

A few days before the ground war began on 24 February, Gray, a decorated veteran of Vietnam, Grenada and Panama, led a three-ship formation of MC-130s loaded with BLU-82s against Faylakah Island, a mile-long strip of sand off the coast of Kuwait City.

Central Command considered the Iraqi-held island an easy target and saw its capture as another psychological blow



against Saddam Hussein. Gray’s mission was to drop three BLU-82s on the tiny island, prepping it for a follow-up assault by U.S. Marines.

“About two minutes out, the AAA [Anti-Aircraft Artillery] fire began coming up at us. About one minute out, I was beginning to get a little nervous,” Gray said, recalling how enemy radar began to lock onto his formation. He was afraid radar-controlled antiaircraft batteries would blow his formation out of the sky before it could drop the BLU-82s. “The AAA was intense as we flew in from the north.”

All Quiet

The “Blues Brothers” were dropped, exploding almost simultaneously, shutting down the radar and AAA and blowing everybody out of bed in Kuwait City.

“Suddenly it was all quiet on the western end of Faylakah Island,” Gray said. He disputes Marine claims that the bombs missed the island. “I looked at the BDA [Battle Damage Assessment] tapes and saw one bomb hit 100 yards [from the aiming point] at 12 o’clock, 33 yards at 2 o’clock and one right on the money.”

Why the controversy? Faylakah Island had been shelled by the battleship *USS Missouri* with 2,000-pound, high-explosive shells that burrow into the ground and detonate, not fused munitions like BLU-82s that are set to explode 3 feet above the ground.

Gray suspects the Marines who landed on Faylakah were looking for huge craters that were seven times as big as holes left by shells from the *Missouri*. “But our bombs don’t make holes,” Gray explained, “that’s why those guys [Special Forces] were feeling that shock effect 75 or 80 miles away.”

BDU-82s were designed to explode above the ground and create level spots,

BLU-82 looks like a tactical nuke as it explodes in the desert — Brit commandos thought it was! Photo: courtesy 1st SOW

not holes, so they left only a slight indentation in the sand on Faylakah Island — but they apparently made a big impact in Baghdad.

“When you see a couple of big boys like that go off, the Iraqis had to think we were softening up that island for a Marine amphibious assault off Kuwait,” Gray said. But U.S. Navy SEALs deserve most of the credit for keeping the Iraqi planners focused on a Marine amphibious assault.

“Their night raids along the Kuwait coast really got Iraq’s attention,” Gray said. “The BLU-82 drops were only exclamation points to SEAL operations.” The Marine assault by sea anticipated by Saddam was not to be, but its threat caused the Iraqi high command to keep much of its artillery and armor seaward.

“As we flew up to Kuwait City to secure the U.S. Embassy, we could see AAA piece, tank, AAA piece, tank — from the Kuwait border with Saudi Arabia north to the airport in Kuwait City,” recalled Gray, now a military assistant to the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict.

“It was just incredible how much equipment they had stacked up along the coast in preparation for an amphibious landing,” Gray said, satisfied that Saddam Hussein was made to fear a seaborne assault.

Regarding the 15,000-pound bomb itself, Gray commented, “How best to get even for Beirut?”

A regular contributor to SOF, Dale B. Cooper covered the Gulf War at ground level and continues his coverage with after-action reports. ✕



It was an instrument, among many, of incredible tyranny and untold repression. East Germany's *Pistole M* served as a badge of rank in the armed forces and a symbol of uncontrolled police brutality in the *Stasi* (an abbreviation for *Ministerium für Staatsicherheit* — Ministry for State Security). Its mirrorlike black steel finish turned many a heart ice cold with fear and terror while the *Stasi* held sway over the now defunct German Democratic Republic (DDR).

As the communist dictatorship's intelligence and counterintelligence arm, the East German *Stasi* proved to be a worthy successor to Nazi Germany's *Gestapo*. Hitler's Thousand Year Reich lasted only 12 years; Herr Honecker's satellite of the Evil Empire managed to bumble its way through almost a half-century of Marxist

malfeasance before its Wall came tumbling down as well.

While the *Stasi* swaggered through the streets and dark alleys of East Berlin, the *Pistole M* — East Germany's version of the Soviet Makarov — was the rarest of the rare among combloc collectors in the United States. Not less than two years ago, specimens in no more than average condition fetched more than \$2,000. Their value has crumbled with the Wall.

With their uniforms sold to the ragman, the *Stasi*'s Makarovs have been purchased by one of North America's largest and most respected surplus-arms dealers, Century International Arms Inc. (Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 714, St. Albans, VT 05478; phone: 802-527-1252.) Provide them with a signed, certified and current Federal Firearms License and they will sell you an

East German Makarov pistol, complete with two magazines and a police holster for \$139.95 — while they last, which won't be long at this price. All of the specimens I have examined have ranged in condition from excellent, with evidence of only slight holster wear, to about new.

In 1945, the Soviet equivalent of an RFP (Request For Proposal) was announced for the adoption of a new service pistol to replace the TT-33 (Tula/Tokarev, Model 1933). The specifications called for a caliber of either 7.62mm or 9mm and a design to be distinguished from the Tokarev by lighter weight, smaller envelope, increased cost-effectiveness and increased accuracy potential and reliability, along with retention or improvement of the wound ballistics performance of the 7.62x25mm cartridge.

PISTOLE M SPECIFICATIONS

Caliber:9x18mm Makarov (9.27mm bullet diameter).

Operation: Unlocked blowback; semiautomatic; double-action trigger mechanism; slide-mounted, hammer dropping, decocking/safety lever.

Feed: 8-round, detachable, single-column, box-type magazine with open sides.

Weight, empty: 23.4 ounces.

Overall length: 6.4 inches.

Height: 4.7 inches.

Thickness: 1.125 inches.

Barrel: 4-groove with a right-hand twist of one turn in 9.45 inches; chrome-plated chamber and bore.

Barrel length: 3.64 inches.

Sights: Fixed, front and rear; blade-type front and open, square-notch rear.

Finish: Blued.

Furniture: One-piece, wrap-around, black plastic grips.

Manufacturer: East German state arsenal, no longer in production.

Importer: Century International Arms Inc. Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 714, St. Albans, VT 05478; phone: 802-527-1252.

Price: \$139.95.

T&E Summary: Robust and reliable; incredible bargain; exhibits excellent quality control and finish; inadequate sights; acceptable backup envelope; spare parts, accessories and ammunition readily available at reasonable cost; symbolizes the decline and fall of the Evil Empire.



Externally, the Makarov pistol appears to be little more than a scaled-up Walther PP. Internally, it is considerably more. Only 6.4 inches in overall length with a total height of 4.7 inches, the PM measures 1.125 inches in thickness at its widest point — the grip panels. Weight, empty, is 23.4 ounces. Its relatively low-power 9x18mm cartridge permits operation by means of unlocked blowback — far more cost-effective to manufacture in mass quantity than a locked-breech design and, in this instance, with a loss in wound ballistics potential of only the extremely high-velocity 7.62x25mm bullet's tendency to vastly overpenetrate soft tissue. The four-groove, chrome-plated 3.74-inch

barrel, with a right-hand twist of one turn in 9.45 inches, is pinned to the frame — conventional for blowback-operated handguns.

The Makarov's firing mechanism is unusual and differs considerably from that of the Walther PP/PPK series. When fired double-action, a sustained pull on the trigger pushes the sheet-metal trigger bar, to which it is attached, forward. Forward movement of the trigger bar causes the cocking lever, connected to its rear end, to pivot upward, engage a notch in the hammer and rotate it back. When the cocking lever slips out of this notch, it lifts the sear up, freeing the rebounding-type hammer to roll forward and strike the

firing pin.

A cam slot in the recoiling slide forces the cocking lever to the right, clear of the sear. This permits the spring-loaded sear to engage its notch in the hammer and hold it back in the cocked position as the slide moves forward to strip and chamber another round. Subsequent rounds are fired single-action. When the trigger is released, the cocking lever moves back under the sear, ready to pull it away from the hammer after the trigger has been pulled once more. Trigger pull weights on our test specimen were spongy, but surprisingly light — 8 3/4 pounds in double-action and only about 4 pounds in single-action.

There are numerous other differences between the Makarov and Walther PP/PPK pistols — all directed at increased production cost-effectiveness. The Makarov has no loaded-chamber indicator, and who really cares that it doesn't? Walther pistols have a coil-type mainspring, while the Makarov uses a leaf-type mainspring that also serves as the disconnecter spring and magazine catch/release spring.

Makarov slide-stops have an external lever on the left side of the frame which is pushed downward to release the slide. Walther slides must be retracted slightly by hand and then released. The rear end of the Makarov's sheet-metal slide-stop serves as the ejector. The Makarov's two-piece, spring-loaded extractor is mounted on the slide to the rear of the ejection port in the Walther manner. But, the disconnecter's and sear/trigger linkages are quite different.

The Makarov's slide-mounted manual safety is pushed up for "safe" and rotated down for "fire." This conforms to proper human engineering, but these positions are reversed on the Walther pistols — to their detriment. Engaging the Makarov safety lever drops the hammer if it's cocked, moves a bar between the hammer and firing pin and locks both the slide and hammer.

Walther magazine catch/release buttons are located on the left side of the frame, to the rear of the trigger. Makarov magazine catch-releases are found at the heel of the frame in the European manner (apparently a design stipulation based upon wartime experiences with the TT-33 Tokarev pistol, in which the magazine was involuntarily released by accidental pressure against the magazine catch/release button — located on the frame in back of the trigger guard).

Makarov magazines are of the single-column type, of all-steel construction and hold eight rounds. The floorplate can easily be removed for disassembly and cleaning. A U-shaped bend at the bottom of the follower spring protrudes through a small slot in the follower's floorplate to hold that component in place — a small but clever example of cost-effective engineering. The floorplate projects slightly forward of the frontstrap to prevent the hand from sliding downward.



Instrument of tyranny and repression, the East German Pistole M was issued to the infamous *Stasi* (Ministry for State Security), sometimes with a chain "come-along" and collapsible truncheon, shown against the backdrop of a Stasi uniform and cap, East German passport and Stasi ID book.

Designs were submitted by F.V. Tokarev, S.G. Simonov, S.A. Korovin, P.V. Voyevodin, I.I. Rakov, N.F. Makarov and others. The design submitted by Nikolay Fyedorovich Makarov was selected after extensive trials and adopted in 1951 as the Model PM (*Pistolet Makarov*). As a consequence of his efforts, N.F. Makarov received the "State Prize Laureate" in 1952. It was largely deserved, as his design provided almost all of the specifications requested.



Holsters for the East German Makarov pistol included, left to right: Stasi shoulder rig, standard police leather belt holster and camouflage-pattern military holster manufactured just prior to the collapse of the Berlin Wall.

STASI PISTOLE M

**\$140 Surplus
East German Makarovs**

Text & Photos by Peter G. Kokalis



Left to right: the bottlenecked 7.62x25mm cartridge was largely replaced by the 9x18mm Makarov round, shown here in both the ball and dummy versions as manufactured in East Germany. Its squat, 9.27mm bullet is certainly to be preferred over the pathetic 5.45x18mm bottlenecked cartridge which superseded it in the former Soviet Union.

Large cutouts on each side of the magazine body clearly indicate the number of loaded cartridges remaining. A lug on the left side of the steel magazine follower projects through the magazine body's left-side cutout and drives the slide stop upward to block the slide and hold it open after the last shot has been fired.

Disassembly procedures follow those of the Walther PP/PPK. Remove the magazine and clear the pistol. Rotate the safety lever down to the "fire" position. Pull down on the front of the trigger guard and offset it to one side or the other, so that it is held open. Pull the slide fully rearward and lift the rear end off the frame. Ease the slide forward and off the barrel. Separate the recoil spring from the barrel. To remove the one-piece, black plastic grip assembly, just unscrew the single retaining screw on the backstrap and slide the grip rearward. No further disassembly is usually required. Reassemble in the reverse order. Install the recoil spring with the smaller diameter end toward the chamber.

Handling characteristics are about what one would expect for a large "pocket" pistol. As pistols go down in size so, most often and unfortunately, do their sights. A fixed-blade front sight and open square-notch rear (adjustable for windage zero only by drifting in its dovetail slot on the slide) are no more than adequate for the close-range capabilities of this pistol. We would be better served if they were of higher profile. A wavy-lined and slightly raised rib between the sights, apparently intended to dissipate heat waves, in reality serves no practical purpose.

Grip-to-frame angle is ergonomically correct and enhances target acquisition. The frame is large enough to accommodate a normal-sized hand. Perceived recoil is hardly a consideration when we drop to these energy levels. At 7 meters or less, both hit-probability and accuracy potential match those of other pistols in this class. Reliability is high: If cleaned and maintained properly, there will be no stoppages attributable to the pistol.

Besides in the Soviet Union and East Germany, versions of the Makarov pistol were made only in the People's Republic of China (PRC), where it is known as the Type 59, and in Bulgaria.

East German versions of the Makarov differ from the Soviet-type only in markings, finish, grips and a few very minor cosmetic features. To dispense with the latter differences first, the safety lever's serrations are latitudinal on the Soviet version and longitudinal on the East German model. There are 10 cocking serrations on the left side of the East German Makarov's slide and 12 on the Soviet; also, there are 17 and 13 cocking serrations, respectively, on both models' right sides. Finally, the raised rib on the slide is slightly wider on the East German variant. (Does anyone, outside of a charter member of the Military-Pistol-of-the-Month Club, really want or need to know

Combloc Cartridge

Sometime during the late 1950s, East Germany adopted the Soviet Makarov pistol and its somewhat enigmatic 9mm cartridge. The 9x18mm Makarov cartridge is thought to be derived from a 1936 project initiated by Fritz Walther of Zella-Mehlis (Suhl), Germany. The cartridge itself, called the "9mm Ultra" was developed by GeCo (Gustav Genschow & Co. Of Durlach). Neither this early German effort nor the subsequent Soviet round should be confused with the post-World War II Walther 9mm Ultra. There are subtle dimensional differences between all three and they are not interchangeable.

The 9mm Makarov lies midway between the 380 ACP and 9mm Parabellum in both size and wound ballistic potential. The Polish Wz63 and Russian Stechkin machine pistols are also chambered for this cartridge. At 17,000 psi chamber pressures are low enough to permit unlocked blowback operation. (Note: A few unlocked blowback-operated pistols, such as the Spanish Campo Giro of 1913 and the Astra 400/600 series, have been chambered for more powerful cartridges — in this instance the 9mm Largo, or Bergmann-Bayard, and 9mm Parabellum.)

The rimless, straight-sided case is 18.05mm in overall length with a 10mm base diameter. East German production of the 9mm Makarov cartridge featured a gray-lacquered steel case, with either a purple or red primer annulus and case mouth sealant. It was loaded with 3.5 grains of a short, extruded tubular kernel powder. The squat, Round Nose (RN) Full Metal

(steel) Jacket (FMJ) bullet has a lead core and weighs 95 grains, with a diameter of 9.27mm and a length of only 11.4mm. Muzzle velocities range from about 950 to 1,035 fps.

All East German production of this cartridge was apparently centered at the former Poite factory in Magdeburg, which was presumed to be the location for factory code "04" — the only headstamp code ever noted. The earliest known headstamp is "04 59," indicating manufacture in 1959. This facility also produced black plastic dummy rounds with a steel base in substantial quantity. Century Arms expects to import at least 1 million rounds of East German 9mm Makarov ball ammunition.

The wound ballistics potential of this cartridge is no more than mediocre. Its FMJ projectile does not deform, but will penetrate deeply (fortunately, not to the extent of the bottlenecked 7.62x25mm cartridge it replaced, whose 86-grain FMJ bullet zips downrange at 1,455 fps and will penetrate more than 50 inches of soft tissue). Because of its 9.27mm diameter, it will make a slightly bigger hole than a 380 ACP bullet, but with still only marginal effectiveness. To armed professionals in this country, the Makarov pistol and its cartridge would qualify for no more than backup duty. It is certainly to be preferred, however, over the pathetic 5.45x18mm cartridge which superseded it in the former Soviet Union and which provides a wound ballistics potential no better than the anemic .25 ACP round.

— P.K.

this kind of information?)

The East German Pistole M is marked on the left side of its frame with the serial number, plus two digits indicating the last two digits of the year of manufacture and also a single letter surrounded by a semicircle of dots. A subassembly number (not matching the serial number) will be found on the left side of the frame under the grip panel, and on the left side of the trigger guard (that portion resting within the frame).

The last two digits of the serial number will be found scribed by hand on many of the smaller Makarov components, such as the trigger bar, sear and hammer. The complete serial number also appears on the left side of the slide. All of the pistols imported by Century Arms have matching serial numbers, except for the magazines. This conforms to my experience in the field, as no Makarov I have ever examined, from Africa to Central America, was ever equipped with matching serial-number magazines. U.S. import regulations required stamping the frames with "9MM MAK" on the left side (over an original mark of unknown significance: "K100"

in a rectangle) and "CAI ST ALB VT" and "GERMANY" on the right side. This has been done in a manner that will not diminish collector interest.

Most of the components are milled forging and all the metal parts have been black oxide finished (salt blued). The exterior of the frame and slide were highly polished on all East German Makarovs prior to bluing, and the results — in the Teutonic tradition — are of the highest quality. If in no other regard, East German Makarovs exhibit a deeper and more lustrous finish, closer tolerances and greater attention to detail than any Makarov ever produced in the Soviet Union, PRC or Bulgaria (and some recent Walther P/PPKs, as well). I would expect this, as East Germany also produced the best-quality Kalashnikov rifle, in my opinion.

Makarov grips are of the one-piece, wraparound type with a single, slot-head retaining screw on the backstrap. This screw has a circular head on the East German version, while that of the Soviet and PRC models has four half-circle cutouts around the head. They are not interchangeable.

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Soviet Makarovs carry a single star in a circle on each side of their reddish-brown grip panels, which have a lanyard loop in the lower left corner. East German grip panels are of checkered black plastic and carry no emblems. There is also no lanyard loop. However, early grip panels had a black-nylon lanyard cord attached to a sheet-metal retaining clip inside the grip assembly. This lanyard either passed through a small hole in the grip directly under the retaining screw (very awkward and uncomfortable when the firing grip was assumed), or passed down the bottom of the grip in back of the magazine catch/release. It appears that the concept of a lanyard was eventually discarded, as it is not found on more recent East German Pistolet M grips.

In order to gain enough points to qualify for importation under the handgun factoring system developed by the wizards at the BATF, these pistols were imported with crude, injection-molded grips that have a thumb-rest on the left side. They are an abomination and should be dumped immediately and replaced with either those of the original type, which are readily available, or with Russian grips.

These latter are available from R.T.W. Sales (Dept. SOF, 4802 E. Ray Road, Box 23-16, Phoenix, AZ 85044; phone: 602-759-1406) in new condition for \$40. They can also provide a spare parts kit consisting of the following important, brand-new East German Makarov components: extractor and spring, hammer, safety lever and spring, rear sight, firing pin, recoil spring, trigger-guard spring, mainspring/magazine catch/release spring, trigger bar, slide-stop lever, and the sear and its spring. The kit costs only \$45. If this is insufficient, R.T.W. Sales will sell you a division-level armorer's spare parts kit for the East German Makarov that contains thousands of components (which are completely interchangeable with those of the PRC Type 59 pistols). It costs \$1,500 complete with the original packing crate. With the exception of slides, barrels and frames, R.T.W. Sales can supply all components for the East German Makarov.

The leather holsters supplied with these pistols are either brown or black, and most are ink-stamped on the underside of the flap with "MdI," which stands for the Ministry for Interior, indicating use by ordinary DDR police units. To be of authenticated Stasi origin, the mark would have to be "MfS" (Ministerium fuer Staatsicherheit). Although, a very small quantity of leather shoulder holsters with white canvas flaps were imported and purported to be of Stasi issue, there are no markings of any kind on these holsters to verify this allegation.

R.T.W. Sales also has East German military web holsters for the Makarov which have the so-called "raindrop" camouflage pattern. They are in brand new condition, as the DDR collapsed before they could be issued. They cost only

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\$19.95 each. If you prefer a relic of the Evil Empire itself rubbing against your thigh, a brand new Russian Makarov brown leather holster, complete with cleaning rod and lanyard strap, will set you back only \$30.

Is this a better pistol and cartridge combination than the Walther PP/PPK series in .380 ACP? Since there is no really effective expanding bullet available for the .380 ACP cartridge at this time, I'd say yes — a qualified yes. Interarms imports German-made Walther PP pistols that carry a retail price of \$1,075 each. You can have a stable of almost eight East German Makarovs for that amount of bread, and their overall quality and finish is every bit as good. In addition, you will have obtained a full page of history for a footnote price. ☞

BLOOP TUBE

Continued from page 59

a single-shot goose gun. If it is anticipated that the mission will require the multiple-projectile capability of a fighting shotgun, then I would recommend slinging the M79 and carrying either a Remington 870 or Benelli M1 Super 90 at the ready.

A large number of caliber 40x46mmSR signaling rounds have been developed. The most common are white, yellow, green, red or violet smoke rounds, which are available in three principal types. There is the standard smoke parachute, the smoke canopy — used to mark targets or personnel under moderately thick foliage for air observation — and ground marker smoke, which detonates upon impact and is used for indicating targets or locations. In addition, there are star parachute, and also star-cluster pyrotechnic illumination and signaling rounds.

Three types of riot-control munitions were developed for the M79 and, while no longer manufactured, these are still issued to National Guard units. Tear gas (CS) is dispensed by either the tactical M651E1 or riot-control M674 rounds. A stun-bag round, manufactured by MB Associates, consisted of a double-stitched circular canvas bag, loaded with 4 ounces of lead shot, impregnated with an indelible yellow-dye marker. There is also a multi-baton or so-called "knee knocker" round which propels five pieces of oak dowel downrange.

The M781 practice round has a white plastic case with a blue plastic projectile. Inside the projectile is an orange, talc-sized powder-marking powder and a metal weight (to provide exterior ballistics approximating that of the HE projectile). This projectile is potentially dangerous and should not be fired in the direction of personnel.

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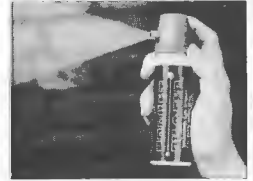


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not prohibited, you can legally own an M79 — although they are not inexpensive. The procedure is somewhat like that involved in obtaining a machine gun, but complicated by the fact that the M79 is classified as a "Destructive Device" (DD). If there is a DD dealer in your state, then you can obtain the weapon from him by means of a ATF Form 4 transfer. Otherwise, you can file an ATF Form 1; after it has been approved, acquire the receiver directly from Amtech International. In either case, a \$200 transfer tax is required.

If you acquire an M79, where can you obtain ammunition? Forget about HE rounds, they aren't worth the hassle of the BATF's cockamammy regulations or the cost. But, all the myriad of other interesting munitions types are perfectly legal. In lots of only one or two, they can often be encountered at local gun shows. The best consistent source I know of is Long Mountain Outfitters (Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 45, Harmony, ME 04942; phone: 207-683-2169).✕

I WAS THERE

Continued from page 18

a short time. As there was little else I could do to help, I decided to leave. The Saudi militia had several road-

blocks surrounding the warehouse and wouldn't let anyone pass. Five Saudi militiamen were barring the road. I attempted to explain to them in English and Arabic that I was an American officer, that I had just come from the site of the incident (my hands were still covered with blood) and that I needed to get back to my quarters, but they wouldn't let me pass. I was tired and in no mood for games. As I drew my pistol, their understanding increased greatly and they waved me through.

The Scud missile took 28 lives and wounded 100, a significant number of the Coalition casualties from Desert Storm. I learned later from a nurse who treated the wounded that two soldiers had been killed by exploding ammunition as they searched wreckage for survivors. The two were recommended for the Medal of Honor. Other officers and I were recommended for citations, but declined — we only did what any soldier would do.

The war ended about a week later. Two months later, I returned stateside to resume my civilian life.✕

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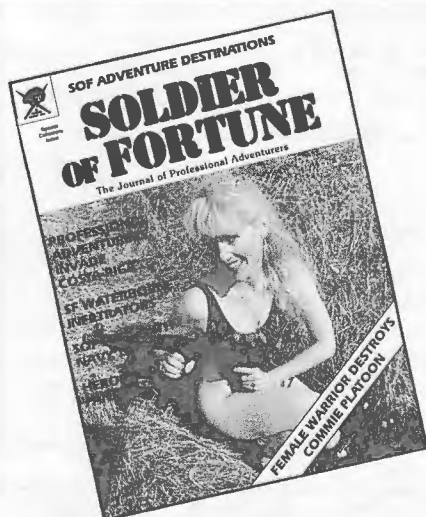
Continued from page 29

With the trench cleared, A Company's other two platoons plunged into the paddy and began their crossing. They encountered heavy fire from snipers in treetops and from another communist unit to their left and to our front, but out of sight. 3rd Platoon fired its weapons into the trees and at the unseen NVA, still moving ahead.

The platoon sergeant, who'd told me minutes before that we were going to make the first charge, stood on the trench parapet in clear view of friend and enemy alike and yelled encouragement while giving 1st and 2nd Platoons a point of reference to head for. It was an incredibly brave act in a day during which bravery was to become commonplace.

The M60 team crawled out of the trench and settled alongside a short thorn hedge that did not afford protection but did furnish concealment. A rifleman came sprinting over the sandy ground and went down with several AK-47 bullets in his left thigh just as he reached us. He lay face to face with me and I saw it was the man I had talked with earlier that day, Garcia. Although the pain must have been horrible, he didn't make a sound other than to say through gritted teeth, "I need help."

The GIs yelled for a medic. I fumbled a field dressing from a pouch on my web



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belt and clumsily tried to wrap it around Garcia's wounds, not doing much good. Then someone flopped down beside us who knew what he was doing, medic Specialist 4 Thomas Cole.

Cole was already a popular member of A Company. He would become more so these next two days because a lot of the men in A Company would need his services. It is impossible to know exactly how many lives he saved.

He ripped open Garcia's trouser leg, cleaned out the wounds and applied compresses properly. He gave Garcia one shot of morphine and then asked, "You going to be OK?" Garcia nodded.

A Company produced a lot of heroes this day and the next, but none more courageous than young Cole. Shortly after tending to Garcia, an AK-47 round ripped into Cole's left cheek just below the eye. He didn't know whether he'd lost the eye or not but cleaned his own wound, bandaged it himself and then ignored it so he could tend to the other wounded.

Sugdinnis was pulling his company together now that all of it was again on dry ground. He established a command post in the far side of the trench, which had turned out to be of an oval shape, perhaps 100 meters in length and 50 across. Most of its former North Vietnamese occupants had fled across an open plain, broken by the raised grave mounds and walled tombs of an ancient Vietnamese cemetery, into a line of bunkers clearly seen in the distance

200 to 300 meters away.

Some enemy remained, however, as the North Vietnamese usually did in such situations: snipers in treetops and diehards concealed in spider holes. They died one by one as cavalrymen sprayed the palms with bursts of full-automatic M16 fire and grenaded the holes.

A Company's situation was this: It had pushed the North Vietnamese and VC regulars with them out of their first line of defense, an apparent staging area. Most of the surviving enemy had retreated to bunkers, but other NVA and VC formations had maneuvered around the Cav's flanks; still more had established themselves as a blocking force, should the Americans try to pull back.

Surrounded And Badly Outnumbered

A Company had found the enemy forces it had been searching for and there were many more than U.S. intelligence had anticipated. In short, A Company was surrounded and badly outnumbered.

Communist mortar rounds from the bunker line began dropping in and around A Company's position. Sugdinnis called for suppressing artillery fire from Cav 105mm howitzer batteries at a firebase located within range.

Henri appeared beside me and began snapping pictures of the command post. Then we moved off together down the trench. Both of us heard artillery rounds approaching; we could tell by their sound

that they were going to fall short. We rolled to the bottom of the trench, buried our heads in our arms and were hurled up a couple of feet as three rounds impacted right on the trench parapets. We were both knocked unconscious for a few moments. I came out of it temporarily deafened with a fierce headache and both of us were bleeding from the ears and nose, but not otherwise hurt. Nor were any of the troopers around us.

"Goddamn it, check them charges," a forward observer screamed into his radio.

Henri looked at me, stunned, and mumbled, "I don't think we are going to make it out of this, Bob."

That was the last thing I wanted to hear because he, more than anyone I knew, had the experience to assess such situations accurately and dispassionately.

Just when it seemed that nothing worse could happen, it did: It started to rain. That meant in all probability there would be no air support nor any helicopter resupply, because rain at this time of the year in central South Vietnam was never light. It usually lasted for at least a day or two and was always accompanied by heavy fog.

Nevertheless, the soldiers behaved as calmly as if they were on a training exercise rather than fighting for their lives. Sugdinnis talked into his radio handset, directing his platoons into assaults on the bunker positions.

A Company tried several times to capture the bunker line, but each assault



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was driven back by furious fire from light and heavy machine guns, AK-47 fire and RPGs. Platoons would advance at a crawl using the raised graves and masonry cemetery walls for cover, then try a rush for the bunkers, be halted by the concentrated fire, pull back to the cemetery, reform, and try it again. But it was a hopeless task — too few men trying to take emplaced positions with no support from the air and too little artillery. Air support was not forthcoming as the rain began falling steadily and harder by the minute.

Finally, Sugdinnis called off the assault and directed his men to pull into a defensive perimeter. During this maneuver, Sergeant Reid Pike displayed another outstanding feat of bravery in a day which had already seen much of it. Three wounded cavalymen had managed to crawl behind one of the old tombs where they were relatively safe from sheets of rifle and machine-gun fire coming from the bunkers. But they were certain to die there if they did not get medical help.

Pike crawled across open ground, through bullets kicking up spouts of sand and through exploding RPG rounds. He dragged one man back and put him into the safety of the trench, where Cole immediately began attending him. This brought a cheer from the cavalymen who'd witnessed it, and then a collective groan as Pike once again crawled the 25 meters or so back to the grave, dragged back another of the wounded three, then did it once more.

Before darkness enveloped the area, A Company's veterans began stripping ammunition and grenades from the dead and badly wounded. Helicopter resupply, they knew, was unlikely; ammunition had begun to run low.

To be continued next month.

Bob Poos, former SOF Managing Editor, is an experienced combat journalist, who has seen action in Vietnam, Central America, Africa and South America. He now lives and works in the Washington, D.C., area. ✕

SEALS' SUB

Continued from page 55

money gets spent. And despite threatened cuts in the defense budget — despite new priorities, new adversaries and shifting strategic goals — the current generation of naval-technocrat program managers is in firm control of the Navy's budget dollars. This fact effectively kills the possibility of building cheaper, tactical anything instead of huge, multi-mission nuclear behemoths of the deep. Thus do the traditional baronial turf wars become the taxpayer's predicament.

But from a SEAL's perspective, the

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In fact, the missions these smaller, cheaper submarines can perform are only limited by one's imagination. In this peacetime era, for example, they could definitely be employed in a drug enforcement capacity, as well as in salvage and rescue operations. To be sure, the minisub is one item where taxpayers — sick of hearing about \$600 toilet seats, \$200 pliers and John Sununu's chauffeur-driven boondoggles — could actually get a lot of bang for their buck ... if someone in Congress had the gumption to overcome the Navy's petty sea-baron mentality.

Richard Marcinko, a retired U.S. Navy commander, was the creator and first CO of SEAL Team Six; his autobiography Rogue Warrior was published by Pocket Books last March.

John Weisman is a Washington-based writer specializing in espionage and military topics; his most recent work, Shadow Warrior, about the life of CIA agent Felix Rodriguez, was released last fall by Pocket Books.

COCAINE

Continued from page 39

Escobar told Bilonick that he had the same deal with the Sandinistas as he did with Noriega. Apparently Noriega had developed cold feet and did not want to cooperate so openly with Escobar and Castro. After all, Panama was expected to cooperate with the DEA; Nicaragua and Cuba were not.

Castro's Cover-Up

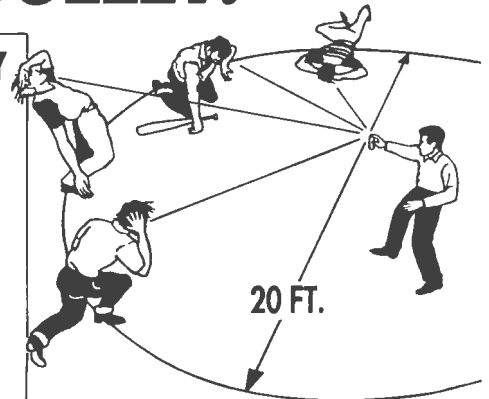
By summer of 1989, Castro decided to follow Noriega's lead and act like he was cooperating with the anti-drug effort. After all, the Soviets had cut aid drastically and Castro felt that the Soviet empire might collapse altogether. If that happened, Castro wouldn't have anyone to protect him if he were indicted as a drug trafficker, and it would not help the "revolution" if he became an international pariah. Somebody had to take the rap, and it wasn't going to be him, nor his brother, Raul.

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arrested for drug trafficking and executed four of them. In one move, he got rid of the reformers and took the heat off of himself for the trafficking.

However, Castro's attempt at a cover-up was filled with holes. What about all the other guys who had been fingered as a part of the cocaine conspiracy — guys like Vesco and Pineiro? None of them were arrested. What about the fact that Vice Admiral Aldo Santamaria, one of the tribunal judges who condemned others to prison or death, was indicted in Miami in 1982 for smuggling Quaaludes and marijuana into the United States?

During the trials, Castro said he would shoot drug planes down, adding he was going to cooperate with international anti-narcotics efforts. Although this new policy was announced in June 1989, on 9 July that year two Cuban MiGs held U.S. Customs away while a plane dropped a load of cocaine to a boat waiting inside Cuban waters. The Customs Service later caught the boat south of Miami with some 1,600 pounds of cocaine aboard.

Immediately after the show trials, the U.S. Coast Guard tracked at least two more planes passing over Cuba that made cocaine drops in the Florida Keys, and they have detected at least two such shipments per week since. In addition, to this date Castro has not shot down, or even at, a single plane.

Castro made some of his motives in the cover-up apparent on 26 July 1989, when he told an audience not to be surprised if they woke up one morning to find the Soviet Union had disintegrated, and to be prepared for total isolation, blockades or even an invasion. Castro saw the writing on the wall and wanted to change his image before it was too late.

After the United States invaded Panama and arrested Noriega, Castro really began getting the jitters. On 6 January 1990, the word "got out" that Vesco had fled Cuba for parts unknown. In reality, Vesco was still in Cuba.

Time For Justice

Considering all the evidence against him, why hasn't Castro been indicted? He was more involved in drug trafficking to the United States than Noriega; he is a worse violator of human rights than Noriega and he is just as much a dictator as Noriega ever was. Maybe it is because Castro has always been the darling of the liberal media.

The whole time Castro was orchestrating a drug plague upon America, the liberal media was covering for him by trying to convince us that the U.S. government, the CIA and the contras were the ones running drugs. The liberal media demanded action against Noriega because they thought his trial would finally implicate the U.S. government. The plan backfired: Noriega's trial ended up implicating the Castro brothers instead of George Bush.

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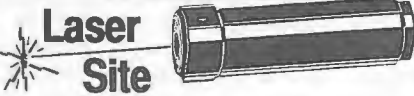
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Noriega's trial brought out testimony from Rivas that he met with Raul Castro on two occasions to negotiate Cuban assistance with drug flights. However, the liberal media played down Rivas' testimony about Castro, while emphasizing his hearsay statement that he had heard the Medellin cartel had contributed \$10 million to the contras.

A couple years ago, another convicted smuggler stated Raul Castro was present while cocaine was unloaded from an airplane for transshipment to the United States; he also connected Fidel Castro to the trafficking. Fidel Castro was also implicated at Noriega's trial for mediating the cocaine dispute between Noriega and the Medellin cartel.

In 1987, a Cuban intelligence officer named Manuel De Buenza defected to Canada and stated Vesco was Fidel Castro's personal adviser on the drug trade and on American affairs, and that Castro knew about all the drug flights. Finally, ex-Sandinista *commandante* and contra leader Eden Pastora quoted Fidel Castro as saying "We are going to make the people up there [the United States] white, white with cocaine."

Fidel and Raul Castro have orchestrated the poisoning of American people for 30 years. They have also oppressed, imprisoned and executed their own citizens in Cuba for the same period. It is time for these two narco-Stalinists to be brought to justice, and for the Cuban people to be free from them and their criminal clique.

Mitchell Henderson worked undercover in Central and South America. He is now living under an assumed name, actively working for the U.S. government.

SHELL GAME

Continued from page 49

bulldozer's tracks grazed a TOW missile warhead on one side, and a 4.2-inch mortar round on the other. At the time, I was moving in reverse and had no blade to protect me. If either the warhead or the mortar round had detonated I would have been killed on the spot. The close call made me sweat all the more. Glancing upward, I thanked God I was still alive.

The Eventuality

On 17 October, after four weeks cleaning up the Ad Dawhah site, Todd Emmons ran out of luck. He was pulling a piece of metal from beneath a Conex box when a 40mm HE round exploded at his feet. Shrapnel struck him on the right side of his head and shattered his upper right arm and elbow, while fragmenting bones in his lower legs.

One piece of shrapnel entered Todd's right eye. Another two pieces penetrated

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right eye. Another two pieces penetrated his flak vest but entered only his outer layer of body fat. Todd was blown several feet into the air, but he hit the ground still alive. If not for the Second Chance vest, he would have been a dead man. A Jordanian assistant working nearby lost an eye and suffered leg wounds from flying shrapnel.

From all areas of the site, the rest of us moved to Todd's position, being careful not to rush and cause another explosion. R.J. Smith, our emergency medical technician, applied pressure on Todd's various wounds and stopped the bleeding from a large hole in Todd's right thigh.

After R.J. had started an intravenous feeding and applied the necessary bandages, we loaded Todd on a stretcher and hoisted him into a military ambulance bound for the Black Horse field-evacuation point.

As it happened, Todd lost about 30% vision in his right eye. After his condition stabilized in a Kuwaiti hospital, he was flown to his home in Detroit where he underwent several operations on his arms and legs. Meanwhile, the rest of us spent the next three weeks finishing the perilous cleanup.

On one of my last days before flying home to Montana, I was shoveling soot, wire and shrapnel when a 40mm grenade rolled out of the debris at my feet. I stared at it for several seconds, sensing the hair on my back rising. It did not detonate, but simply served as a final reminder of the

riskiness of this most dangerous mission in EOD history.

My wife's embraces had never felt so good as they did several days later when I stepped off my plane in Missoula, alive and whole.

Author's note: The cleanup of Kuwait continues in 1992. The Environmental Chemical Corp. has hired more than 300 men, including 50 to 60 EOD technicians, to sweep the DMZ between Kuwait and Iraq, an area 170km long by 5km wide — teeming with dangerous ordnance.

Gary R. Smith is a retired career SEAL, and the subject of two soon-to-be-published books. Alan Maki is a Montana-based freelance writer.

FLAK

Continued from page 13

I realize that it cost you a lot of money to win the appeal on the "Gun For Hire" scam a few years back. That was bad enough; this is lunacy.

Here's my check. I wish I could send more today. Sincerest good luck. Death to tyrants.

Randy K. Rogers
Kenai, Alaska

Your response to our plea for help has been encouraging. Although we could print only a fraction of the letters we've received, I want to express my personal thanks to everyone who has written and sent in contributions.

As I mentioned in April '92's "Command Guidance," we have been plagued by lawsuits over the past six years. We are now being sued by a former soldier whose photo, taken in Vietnam, is on the dust jacket of a book on the history of the Vietnam War published by another company, which we advertised for sale in the magazine. We didn't even publish the book! So far our legal costs in preliminary phases of this bogus case are more than \$25,000, and we have just begun to fight. With your support, we will prevail.

—RKB

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HEAVY FLAK

Continued from page 51

a male/female issue as it is a good soldier/bad soldier issue.

Sergeant Sasser's stories regarding cowardice of women are completely contradicted in the March 1990 issue of *Soldiers* magazine, in an article titled "The Women of Just Cause," by Donna Miles. One argument against women in combat is that a higher percentage of them are apt to panic under fire. Show me a man who says that he has never experienced fear, and I'll show you a liar.

As far as women being physically unable to do combat jobs, that's simply untrue. When I was in the Primary Leadership Development Course, I saw more than one female soldier return from a patrol carrying a PRC-77 or an M60. As a matter of fact, some guys from one squad were saying that a female in their squad insisted on doing her share of the humping. I've heard plenty of men bitch about carrying extra equipment.

As for women getting pregnant, maybe the men should be counseled. They're the ones that made them that way. Some of Sasser's women were fighting with each other. How many times have male soldiers turned from the field with black eyes? I've been in a few fights myself.

It's hard to judge how women would react to combat from Desert Storm simply

because few saw combat there. A vast majority of soldiers spent six months of boredom there without seeing any combat. Even men in combat arms didn't see any action.

In all fairness to Sgt. Sasser, I don't think we should allow hard-line women's libbers into combat, either. This man's Army has no room for women who think they are better than men. All soldiers were created equal. I don't like anyone who expects special treatment due to race, color, creed or sex. Nor do I want to see a bunch of yahoos who are just in it for the college money. Half of my artillery unit claimed that if we were called to duty in the Storm, they wouldn't go. The college-money song and dance was popular.

Women are allowed to fight in other countries of the world. I think many Vietnam veterans will testify that female Viet Cong were as dangerous, if not more dangerous, than their male counterparts. I know many women police officers have taken bullets meant for any cop in general. If American women can fight our battles on the home front, why not abroad?

Why not at least give them a chance? Maybe the opposition is right and it won't work. However, we'll never know unless we give them a try. I'll take a hardworking female over a lazy male any day.

Spc. William B. Wolf
Cashton, Wisconsin

Editor:

First Sergeant Sasser's article concerning the presence of women in combat and combat-support units during times of both peace and war was blunt, to the point and right on target.

Former Marine Commandant General Robert H. Barrow approached the issue from a military and gentleman's standpoint, based on extensive combat experiences in countless battles spanning 30 years. He said, "It's uncivilized and women can't do it. Women give life, sustain life, nurture life — they can't take it. If you want to make a combat unit ineffective, assign women to it."

William F. Buckley stated, "... because we know that women should be educated and should vote and should exercise their capacity to lead does not dissipate that tropism that assigns to the woman primary responsibility for the care of the child, and to the man, primary responsibility for the care of the woman."

The decision to place women in the combat zone during Desert Storm was unpopular among many civilians and military personnel. Any decision to include women in direct combat, whether in the air or on land, will be viewed as morally objectionable, and our armed forces will likely suffer from a quiet separation of good servicemen and women.

Capt. Gregorio L. Sheehan,
USMCR
Altoona, Pennsylvania ✕

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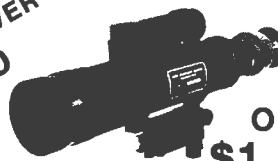
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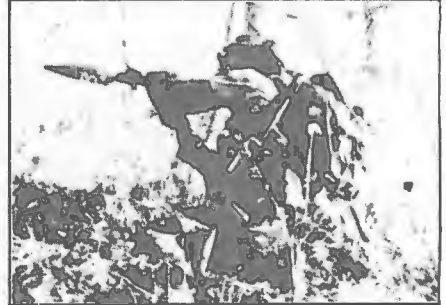
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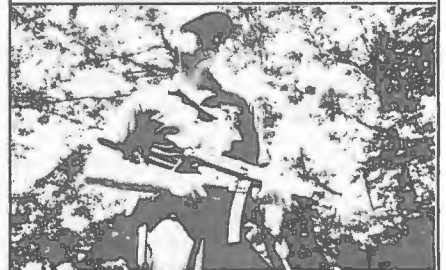


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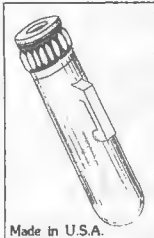
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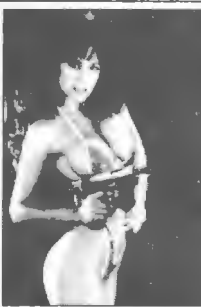
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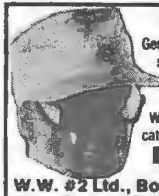
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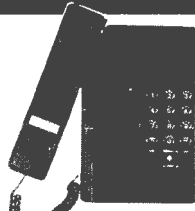
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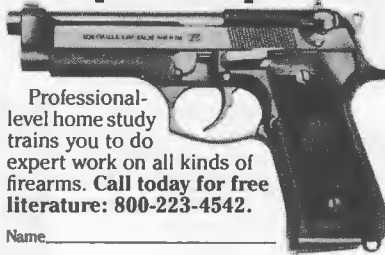
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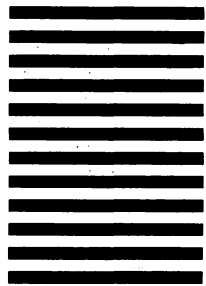
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